THE BIBLE AND THE SPADE

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TO THE READER

This little book was not written for the specialist; for him the explorers in Bible lands have told of their discoveries in volumes so many and so bulky that few have the time or the patience to read them. It speaks briefly and simply only of the discoveries which have shed a direct and wonderful light on the Bible. No novel is more fascinating than the stories the biblical archæologist may tell, and it is hoped that the following pages may not only interest, but inspire the busy reader to a deeper and more intelligent study of The Book.

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Chapter I

EXCAVATORS AND EXCAVATIONS

These are the days when we study the Bible with the spade. Our fathers were content to commit the Bible to memory, verse by verse, and the passages they could not understand they believed were beyond human understanding; but the modern scholar, with spade in hand, has gone to the Bible lands to dig up the Bible cities, and as they are uncovered, their very stones cry out the story of the long-forgotten past. Little by little there are being recovered from the buried cities of Palestine, Asia Minor, Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Persia, Arabia and the Hittite Land, the records which are making the Bible clearer and dearer.

The student of things ancient has long been interested in the imposing ruins of Italy and Greece, but biblical archæology was slow in claiming its share of attention. On the surface of the ground in Palestine the early traveler saw few ruins other than those from the time of the Romans, or Saracens, or Crusaders, and it was supposed that all traces of the

Hebrew days had forever disappeared. While pilgrims of every age have faithfully accepted the traditions their Mohammedan guides invented, the scientific exploration of Palestine began in 1838, when the American scholar, Dr. Edward Robinson, startled the world with the story of his discoveries. In 1865 the Palestine Exploration Fund was organized to explore and excavate the sites of the sacred cities, and the names of Wilson, Warren, Kitchener, Palmer, Petrie and Bliss, all officers of that organization, are familiar. Nor should the names of Ganneau and Merrill, consular officials of France and America, be omitted. Excavations at Jerusalem, Lakish and Gezer, and an accurate survey of Palestine and of the Sinaitic Peninsula resulted. For the German Palestine Society, Socin, Guthe, Schick and Schumacher have labored successfully, and the work of Dr. Reisner at Samaria has been of value. Along with these trained archæologists should be mentioned the peasants, whose accidental discoveries have been of even greater importance. There was the peasant who was searching for building stones and discovered the Alexander sarcophagus; there was the truant school boy who first saw the Siloam

inscription; there was the Arab sheik who led a missionary to the Moabite stone.

The monuments of Egypt, standing above the surface, attracted the attention of even the ancient traveler. An Assyrian king of the seventh century B. C. carried two Egyptian obelisks from Thebes to Nineveh, and a Roman emperor erected a third in the Hippodrome at Constantinople. The discovery of the Rosetta stone in 1799, near one of the mouths of the Nile, and the decipherment of the hieroglyphic inscription by means of the accompanying Greek translation, might be called the beginning of the science of Egyptology. The name of Champollion, its translator, will always stand at the head of the long list of the scholars of the Egyptian, though a score of others, among them Mariette, Maspero, Brugsch, Erman, Ebers, Wilkinson, Birch, Poole and Petrie, are scarcely less illustrious. The first discovery of special value to Bible students to be made in the Nile valley was of the mummies of the kings of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twenty-first dynasties. The Amarna tablets, found by a peasant woman while searching for beads, the stele bearing the name of Israel, and the land and

cities of Goshen, where the Israelites toiled, are all of intense interest. It would be a long story which would tell of all of the monuments of ancient Egypt, yet unfortunately few of them throw direct light on the Bible.

Babylonia was the birthplace of the Hebrew nation. There the scenes of the first two thousand years of Bible story are laid; from there the people, later called Hebrews, migrated to Palestine, and thither they were returned as exiles during the days of Sargon and of Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore, as we might expect, the discoveries among the ruins of the Mesopotamian cities have thrown an abundance of light on the Bible and Hebrew history.

The valley of the Tigris and Euphrates lies remote from the track of the tourist. While yearly thousands of travelers visit Palestine and Egypt, none but the explorer, or the occasional merchant, ventures across the great desert to the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon; the Europeans who have seen the city of Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, number less than a score. Until sixty years ago all that was known of the ruins of Babylon were a few inscribed bricks carefully preserved in a little,

square case in the British Museum, and they, together with trilingual inscriptions from the palace of Darius at Persepolis, formed the key by which Grotefend, a German scholar, deciphered the long-lost language of Nebuchadnezzar.

In the year 1842, M. Botta, the French consul at Mosul, an Arab town near the ruins of Nineveh, startled the world by his discovery in the neighboring mound of Khorsabad, of the palace of the Bible king Sargon. Even more important were the discoveries made by Layard, the father of Assyriology, during the years between 1845 and 1851. At Nineveh and at Nimrud to the south, he found the ruins of the palaces of five Assyrian kings who are mentioned by name in the Bible, together with a vast library of clay tablets and sculptured slabs, which now form one of the most valuable collections in the British Museum. Rawlinson, Loftus, Taylor, Smith, Rassam and de Sarzec have each added to this material. The expedition to Nippur, sent out by the University of Pennsylvania between the years 1888 and 1896, recovered seventy thousand inscribed objects; yet among them are few of direct value to the Bible student. More recently the

Germans under Koldewey have laid bare the palaces and temples built by Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon, and the expedition of the University of Chicago, conducted by the author, has recovered a distinct picture of the age when the Semites first appeared in the world's history.

The Hittites, those mysterious people so frequently mentioned in the Bible, are only now receiving the attention they deserve, for at last it is evident they were one of the greatest of ancient nations. Their monuments have been found scattered throughout Asia Minor, and in 1906 Dr. Winkler of Berlin discovered at Boghazkeui a large collection of clay tablets, which may ultimately be the key to the decipherment of the Hittite language. The patient work of Mr. Wood at Ephesus was not without its rewards. Persia, too, has added its share of material, for the French under de Morgan have long been excavating at Susa, and the customs of the days of Queen Esther are no longer strange. And yet, in spite of the scores of expeditions to the buried cities of Bible lands, and the scores of scholars who have given their lives to this side of Bible study, the work of the archæologist has only begun; all the light the discoveries have thus far

thrown on the Bible may be but a tiny spark when compared with the great floods of light that future excavators may hope to find.

Chapter II

THE BABYLONIAN STORY OF THE CREATION

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1.

In the year 1845, while the Frenchmen, Botta and Place, were excavating from the ruin mound of Khorsabad the palace of the Assyrian king Sargon and its wonderful treasures, Austin Henry Layard, a young Englishman, was hunting in the Tigris valley. The beautifully sculptured slabs from the walls of King Sargon's palace, and the mysterious cuneiform inscriptions interested him intensely and, believing that Nineveh should yield similar objects, he began to dig into the ruins of that old city. Though Botta had excavated there and had failed to find anything of value, Layard and his successors revealed the palaces of two of the greatest of the Assyrian kings. The story of his discoveries is told in his charmingly written book, "Nineveh and its Remains." One of the palaces belonged to

Assurbanipal, the last great king of Nineveh, who ruled Assyria from 668 to 626 B. C. Even Assurbanipal was an archæologist, for he sent his agents to the older cities of the south to collect clay tablets, or to copy their ancient inscriptions. In his royal palace he stored vast collections of these books of clay, a library estimated to contain not far from one hundred thousand volumes. In 606 B. C., when Nineveh was captured and deserted, the clay library was buried in the ruins of the palace. Layard found it, and weeks were spent in removing it and in boxing it up to be sent to the British Museum, where it is now treasured.

After the tablets from the Nineveh library had been taken to the British Museum, and scholars had learned to read the writing upon them, they were found to embrace a great variety of subjects. There were the business documents of the people, records of the court and of the state, psalms and hymns, stories, proverbs and poems; in short, the literature of a great people. Some of the tablets bore stories of the creation of the world, and it seems that the stories had been copied from more ancient tablets. From just what age and

place the originals came, no one knows, yet it seems that in a remote antiquity, probably before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, the Babylonians were familiar with the stories. Unfortunately the tablets upon which they are recorded are fragmentary, and here and there only the thread of the narrative may be obtained. Were the tablets complete, their translation would occupy a volume of considerable size, for one of the stories covers seven large tablets, like so many volumes of a book. Its opening lines are as follows:

> When the heavens above were not yet named,
> And the earth beneath bore no name,
> Then, in the beginning, the abyss of waters begat them,
> And the chaos of the deep bore them all.
> The waters were not yet gathered together;
> The fields were untilled, and the marsh lands bare.
> None of the gods had yet appeared;
> No name did they bear; no destiny had they fixed;
> Then were the gods created.

In the continuation of the story we read of the long wars fought by the newly created gods, until finally the victorious Marduk smote the goddess Tiamat in twain, and spreading out one part of her body, he formed the heav-

ens, with the other part he created the earth. The other monsters, which he slew, he transformed into the signs of the zodiac. A later fragment of the story continues:

He established the stations for the great gods;
The stars also, and the constellations, he fixed in their places.
He ordained the year and divided it into seasons;
The twelve months he arranged according to the stars. . . . .
In the midst of the heaven he placed the zenith.
Nannar, the moon-god, he brought forth and instructed to rule the night.

A fragment of another Babylonian story of the creation contains the following lines:

No temple of the gods had yet been built in a sacred place;
No reed had grown; no tree had been planted;
No brick had been laid; no building erected;
No house had been built; no city founded. . . . .
The ocean had not yet been created. . . . .
The world was all one sea. . . . .
At length there was a movement in the sea. . . . .
Marduk constructed an enclosure about the waters;
He formed dust and heaped it up at the sides of the enclosure.
He created mankind,

And the potter goddess with him created the seed
of mankind.
He created the beasts of the field, and the living
creatures of the dry land.
The Tigris and the Euphrates he formed. . . .
And gave them good names.
The grass, the reed and the forests he planted;
The green things of the field he produced.
The wild cow and her young, the wild ox calf,
The ewe and her young, the lamb of the fold,
The meadow and the forest;
The goat and the wild goat he brought forth. . . .
Bricks he fashioned.
Houses he erected, and cities he built.

Does a relationship between the Babylonian and the Hebrew stories of the creation exist? That is a question for the critic to discuss. It is only certain that the long stories of the creation were recited by the Babylonians, and in the days of Abraham they must have been known to the people who crossed the desert, and who were later known as the Hebrews.

Chapter III

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Genesis 2:8.

Of all theological controversies none has called forth more diverse theories than those relating to the location of the Garden of Eden. To find the home of primitive man has taxed the ingenuity of theologians and travelers of every generation. The second chapter of Genesis explicitly states that two of the four rivers of the garden were the Euphrates and the Hiddekel of Assyria, a name by which the ancients called the Tigris, yet Eden has been located in widely separated parts of the world; in Armenia, in India by the Ganges, in Egypt, in the Sinaitic Peninsula, in the African Mountains of the Moon, in Labrador, at the North Pole, and one theologian has identified it with the entire earth.

The author of the story of the Garden of Eden, however, certainly had in mind some

part of the Mesopotamian valley, and in searching for its site, a study of the Tigris and Euphrates is essential. Six thousand years ago the rivers did not flow in their present beds. Rising in Armenia, they follow their ancient channels until they enter the alluvial plain of Babylonia, but from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf their courses are constantly changing. Some years ago the Euphrates left its bed north of Babylon, and after converting hundreds of miles of the desert into swamps, returned to its old course at Samawa, a week's journey to the south. From the town of Koot, on the lower Tigris, a canal, called the Shatt el-Hai, crosses Babylonia to the Euphrates not far from the ruins of Ur; according to the Arabic historians, the canal marks the course of the Tigris of a thousand years ago, when the rivers flowed together a hundred miles above their present confluence. The shores of both streams, undermined by the current, are constantly caving and shifting.

Moreover, the Tigris and Euphrates bring down from the mountains a vast amount of silt, which they deposit at their mouths, and it is estimated that the Persian Gulf is now growing shorter a mile in every thirty years. All



Along the Euphrates

of the country south of Bagdad was thus formed, and there was a time when the Persian Gulf extended over all of Babylonia, when the sites of the cities, now far inland, were beneath the sea. It is therefore uncertain where the ancient rivers used to flow, or where they met, or if by separate mouths they reached the Persian Gulf.

The Pison and Gihon, two of the rivers of Eden, may not be positively identified with any existing streams, yet the author may have had in mind two great canals, which the ancients called rivers, and which they distinguished by names. The bed of one may be traced along the edge of the plateau to the west of the Euphrates; another ran along the foot-hills of the Persian Mountains, parallel with the Tigris; possibly they were the Pison and the Gihon of the Bible story.

About a hundred miles north of the Persian Gulf, where the Tigris and Euphrates unite to continue southward in one stream, is a place which the natives call the Garden of Eden. There they point out a "tree of knowledge," and tell tales of a crafty serpent which still lingers about its roots and plays with the village children. True it is that no spot could

be better adapted to the needs of primitive man. There the Arab finds shelter in the shade of the tall date-palm. The fresh dates are his favorite food; dried, he grinds them to flour for his bread; from their juice he makes a sweet drink and vinegar, and his arrack and sugar; he crushes the fruit to make his jam or butter; with the tree trunk he builds his house, and with the leaf blades he braids his baskets and dishes; with the leaf stems he fashions his chairs, his bed and his boat, and from the fiber of the tree he spins his twine or weaves a coarse cloth for his clothing. Even the date stones he feeds to his camel. A Persian poet has said that the date-tree has three hundred and sixty-five uses, one for each day of the year.

That the Babylonians possessed the story of the Garden of Eden, similar to the biblical story, is certain; a few fragments from the Nineveh library, so small and mutilated that they are almost illegible, are supposed to be a part of a tablet recording it. However, during the excavations at Nineveh, there appeared an impression of an ancient seal distinctly referring to the story. In the center of the little picture is a date-tree; to the right of the tree

is a man; to the left a woman, and behind the woman is a serpent standing erect on its tail. It is possible that in some Babylonian ruin a tablet containing the complete story may be found.

Chapter IV

THE BABYLONIAN STORY OF THE FLOOD

And it came to pass after the seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. Genesis 7:10.

In the year 1872, after the tablets from the Nineveh library had been taken to the British Museum, George Smith, who in his day was the greatest of Assyrian scholars, took up the fragment of a broken tablet and read these words:

> I released a dove; it flew about, but finding no resting place, returned.

They were familiar words, and so significant that their appearance on the little fragment of clay overcame Mr. Smith; he recognized all that the words meant, and fell senseless to the floor. He had discovered a Babylonian story of the flood!

The discovery was heralded throughout the world, and at once a London paper, the *Daily Telegraph,* provided funds to send Mr. Smith

to Nineveh in search of the missing fragments of the tablet. In the chamber of the palace of Assurbanipal, where the library was stored, Mr. Smith found the fragment he most desired. Since then other excavators have discovered other copies of the same story, and at last the narrative has become fairly complete.

The Babylonian account of the flood is the eleventh of the twelve chapters of a great epic poem, which may well be compared with the Odyssey of Homer. Like the Greek epic, it is a collection of independent stories woven together; it professes to record the deeds of a national hero, whose name is generally pronounced Gilgamish. The home of the hero was the biblical Erech (Genesis 10: 10), a city now represented by the lofty mounds of Warka in Southern Babylonia. Each of the twelve chapters of the poem was written in several columns on a single clay tablet about eighteen inches long, and the chapters or tablets were numbered or connected as are the volumes of a modern book. None of the tablets has escaped mutilation; even the larger parts of some of them are missing, yet enough of the poem has survived to convey its general

outline. The entire story is so long that its complete translation, if it were possible, would form a volume of considerable size; in brief its outline is as follows:

The city of Erech was besieged by the tyrant Humbaba, and was hard pressed. Gilgamish, the hero of the story, drove away the tyrant, delivered the city and became its king. Though he had saved the city from the tyrant, his own rule became so oppressive that the dissatisfied people prayed to be delivered from him. In answer to their prayers, a monster named Eabani was created to destroy him. Although Gilgamish and Eabani were destined to be enemies, a deep friendship arose between them, and together they made war against the tyrant Humbaba, and slew him.

The beautiful Ishtar, the goddess of love, fascinated by the brave Gilgamish, fell desperately in love with him, and proposed marriage. Her proposal was scornfully rejected, and in revenge, the enraged goddess persuaded her father to create a bull to destroy him. Gilgamish, with his friend Eabani, made war on the bull and killed it. More angry than ever, Ishtar then sent against them an insect with poisonous sting. Eabani was stung, and



Mount Ararat

he died; Gilgamish was also stung, yet while suffering extreme pain, he wandered about the world in search of relief. His wanderings led him among strange peoples, and his experiences were as trying as were those of Odysseus. Finally he was told that he could find relief only in the abode of the dead, beyond the world-encircling ocean, where no mortal but one had ever gone.

The journey to the abode of the dead was long and difficult, but at last upon its shores Gilgamish met Pirnapishtim, the mortal who, like himself, had crossed the waters of death. To him he related the object of his coming. When the story of his wanderings was ended, he begged Pirnapishtim to relate how he, though still living, had come to dwell among the dead. The reply is the Babylonian story of the flood. When Pirnapishtim's story was finished, Gilgamish was bathed in sacred waters, and, healed, he returned to his home in Erech.

Though the entire Babylonian story of the flood is of interest to the scholar, parts of it are mutilated, and the following selected passages will suffice for comparison with the biblical story. It begins:

O Gilgamish, I will tell thee a wonderful story.
Thou knowest the city of Shurippak on the Euphrates?
It was corrupt, and the gods decided to destroy it with a flood.
Ea, the god of wisdom, confided their plans to me.
"Thou man of Shurippak, build a ship;
Forsake thy wealth and save thy life.
Take living beasts of every kind into the ship.
Measure its proportions well, and into the sea shalt launch it."

The description of the Babylonian ark is given in detail. Each of its seven decks was divided into nine rooms, and smeared within and without with bitumen. The ark was finished, and the story of Pirnapishtim continues as follows:

I collected all the silver I possessed;
I collected all my gold;
I collected the seed of life.
I took every thing into the ship—
My slaves, my handmaids, the beasts of the field,
The wild animals of the plain, the sons of the people;
I took them all in.
The god Shamash appointed a season and said:
"In the night I will cause the heavens to rain;
Enter the ship and close the door."
The evening of which he spoke came;

I watched the approaching storm;
I entered the ship and closed the door. . . . .
The deluge covered the surface of the earth. . . . .
In a single day it rose above the mountains,
And like a battle it rushed upon the people.
A brother heeded not his brother;
Men would not help each other.
Six days and nights passed;
The wind and storm were overwhelming.
On the seventh day at dawn, the wind ceased;
The storm, which had smitten the earth like an earthquake, was quieted.
I looked out upon the sea;
All mankind had turned to clay;
Like reeds their corpses floated on the water.
Grieved, I sat down to weep.
At the approach of the seventh day I sent forth a dove;
It flew about, but finding no resting place, returned.
I sent forth a swallow;
It flew about, but finding no resting place, returned.
I sent forth a raven;
It saw the carrion on the waters,
It waded about to feed, but did not return.
I released the animals, and they went in all directions.

Like the biblical narrative, the Babylonian story ends with an account of the first appear-

ance of the rainbow, and with the decision of the gods never again to destroy the world with a flood.

Instead of sending a flood, let lions devour mankind.
Instead of sending a flood, let tigers diminish mankind.
Instead of sending a flood, let famines smite the land.
Instead of sending a flood, let pestilence consume the people.

The Babylonian and Hebrew stories so closely resemble each other that evidently they are related. The fact that the Babylonian story appears as a part of a longer poem indicates in no way whether the story is based on fact or not, for once it was complete in itself; later, during a period of literary activity, it was united with other stories to form a great, national epic.

It is often stated that the Hebrews borrowed the story from the Babylonians, or that the Babylonians borrowed it from the Hebrews, yet it can hardly be said that one can borrow that which is one's own. Babylonia was the birthplace of the Hebrews; the scenes of the first two thousand years of their history

were along the Euphrates, and the stories of the creation, of the Garden of Eden and of the deluge, belonged to them as much as to the Babylonians. The stories of King Alfred belong not only to the English; they belong also to the English colonists wherever they have gone. Thus Babylonian history and literature, until the days of Abraham, was the only history and literature the Hebrews had. It is then not correct to say that the Hebrews borrowed the story from the Babylonians; it was the story of their own people, the story they carried with them when they left their native land to cross the desert.

Chapter V

THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE SEMITES

And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. Genesis 11:2.

In the book of Genesis we are told that Shem, the son of Noah, was the ancestor of all the Semites—the Babylonians, Assyrians, Arabs, Hebrews, Phœnicians and kindred tribes. The original home of these sons of Shem, so the popular impression has been, was the lower Euphrates valley, for there the scenes of the early Bible stories are laid. Recent excavations have shown that Babylonia was not the original home of the Semites; they were once strangers, fighting to possess the land, just as later the Hebrews fought to possess Palestine, for, as they journeyed east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, or Babylonia, and they dwelt there.

In nearly every Babylonian ruin into which the excavator has dug, as Nippur, Fara, Tello

and Bismya, there have appeared numerous stone and clay objects inscribed with a non-Semitic, cuneiform language. Moreover, some of the tablets with this strange language, which scholars have called Sumerian, bear an interlineal Assyrian translation. The appearance of the two languages on the same tablets gave rise to a heated controversy; some maintained that a non-Semitic people, known as the Sumerians, once occupied Babylonia, and were conquered by the Semitic invaders. Others argued that the strange cuneiform writing was but a secret writing invented by the Semitic priests, and that no earlier people ever lived in Babylonia.

Though the controversy may have seemed trifling, it was of extreme importance to the Bible student. It asked if the Semites, or the ancestors of the Hebrews, were the first people to live in Mesopotamia, or if at some earlier time, as strangers to the land, they conquered the country and adopted its civilization. It asked if the old Hebrew institutions are of Semitic origin, or if they may be traced back to the earlier civilization of the Sumerians. It repeated the old catch question, "Where did Cain get his wife?"

Bismya is a group of mounds in central Babylonia, marking the site of the most ancient Mesopotamian city yet discovered. It was excavated by an expedition from the University of Chicago, of which the author was the field director. An account of the remarkable discoveries made by the expedition may be read in the book, "Bismya, or the Lost City of Adab." Excavations in the lowest strata of the temple mound revealed objects so ancient that no date can be assigned to them. Upon those ruins, about 4000 B. C., was built a large temple in which were discovered marble statues, bronze and stone tablets, and vases bearing the names of kings, or inlaid with ivory and bright stones. The art represented by these objects marks that age as one advanced in civilization. The many inscriptions were all in the Sumerian language; not one was in Semitic.

At a still higher level in the same mound was found a piece of gold bearing the name of the Semitic king Naram-Sin; near it were the large, square bricks of his father, Sargon. The appearance of the Semitic bricks and inscriptions above the Sumerian ruins, sug-



The Statue of King David

gests that a Sumerian city had been conquered and occupied by Semites.

In another mound of the Bismya group, representing a residential section, there appeared several seal impressions with the name of the Semitic Sargon, and numerous contract tablets written in the Semitic language. The mound undoubtedly marked the site of a Semitic quarter of the city. In still another mound numerous contract tablets were discovered bearing Sumerian inscriptions.

At Tello were discovered statues inscribed with Sumerian. The head of the statues is always round; the face is full and beardless; the nose is short, the chin square, and the features are decidedly not Semitic. Such also was the head of the statues found among the Sumerian ruins at Bismya and at Nippur. From a later age from Bismya there comes a small, alabaster head of an entirely different type. The face is long and thin, and the nose is strikingly Semitic; the narrow chin, slightly receding, is covered with a pointed beard, and the upper lip bears a mustache. Into the large eye-sockets ivory balls were fitted, but their pupils of stone are missing. A glance at the head shows it to be Semitic; undoubtedly it

comes from that early age when the wandering ancestors of the Hebrews conquered the Sumerians of Mesopotamia.

Who these Semites were, or whence they came, the ruins of Babylonia have not yet told us; we may only be certain that Shinar, or Babylonia, was not their first home. Just as twenty centuries later their descendants conquered Palestine, so they conquered Babylonia. They occupied the Sumerian cities; they worshiped in the Sumarian temples; they adopted the Sumerian literature; they copied the Sumerian art, and they wrote their language in the Sumerian wedge-shaped characters. Sargon, whose date was long supposed to be 3800 B. C., but who may have lived a thousand years later, seems to have been their first great king. From his time traces of the Semites appear with increasing frequency, and the Sumerian language and customs gradually disappear, until only the bilingual hymns and psalms of their temple service remained.

Along the northwestern edge of the Bismya mounds, at the outer base of the city wall of Sumerian bricks, were thousands of clay sling-balls, which had been hurled against the city in Sargon's time. The civilized Sumerians,

clad in armor, fought with spear and shield. The sling was the weapon of the early Semites, and their sling-balls of burned clay tell of the capture of the city, and of their first appearance in the world's history.

Chapter VI

THE TOWER OF BABEL

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven. Genesis 11:4.

In nearly every Babylonian desert village is a watch tower, with summit reaching high above the flat roofs of the houses at its base. In times of danger a watchman stands guard upon it, ever searching the horizon for an approaching enemy. In times of peace the tower is a landmark to guide the wandering villagers back to their homes. Such purposes has the tower served since the day the Semites entered the land of Shinar, and with bricks of clay constructed the Tower of Babel.

When the European traveler first entered Babylonia, he was impressed by the ruin of an immense tower of unburned bricks, called Akkerkuf, three hours to the west of Bagdad. Its height at once suggested the story of the Tower of Babel. When the traveler ventured from Bagdad further into the desert, to the

site of Babylon, he found to the west of the Euphrates another tower so immense that it seemed like a mountain, and at once called it the Tower of Babel. Birs, the modern name it bears among the Arabs, is a corruption of the ancient name Borsippa, the city in which it stood. The city is now represented by two mounds. One, comparatively low and with a level surface, contains the ruins of the palace in which Nabonidus, the last Babylonian king, sought refuge when Babylon fell. Birs, the other mound, rises one hundred and fifty-six feet above the plain. Its sides are so steep that to climb them is fatiguing, and projecting from the summit is an insurmountable mass of brick masonry, now split in twain by lightning.

Herodotus, who described the tower as it was in the days of the Greeks, said that it consisted of seven stages, like seven square boxes, each of a different color, and each standing upon a larger stage beneath. Stairs led from stage to stage on the exterior from the ground to the summit, where there was a small shrine and the statue of the chief god of Babylon. The excavations by Sir Henry Rawlinson of half a century ago partly confirmed this description, for he discovered six of the stages;

the seventh, at the top, had been worn away by the weather, and in the ruins about its base were fragments of bricks glazed with different colors. The encasing bricks of the tower were stamped with the inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, its restorer.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon,
The restorer of the temples Esagil and Ezida,
The first-born son of Nabopolassar,
King of Babylon.

While excavating at the base of the mound, Rawlinson found in a niche in its corner a cylindrical object of clay covered with wedge-shaped writing. The inscription had been placed there by Nebuchadnezzar, just as now objects are deposited in the corner stones of modern buildings; it recorded these words:

The tower of Borsippa, which a former king erected and completed to the height of forty-two cubits, whose summit he did not finish, fell to ruins in ancient times. There was no proper care of the gutters for its water; rain and storms had washed away its bricks, and the tiles of its roof were broken. The great god Marduk urged me to restore it. I did not alter its site, or change its foundation walls. At a favorable time I renewed its brick work and its roofing tiles, and I wrote my name on the cornices

of the edifice. I built it anew as it had been ages before; I erected its pinnacle as it was in remote days.

Thus we learn that even in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, this old tower was a ruin so ancient that the name of its builder had long been forgotten; even its origin was unknown. The Bible story tells us that the Tower of Babel was left unfinished, and according to Nebuchadnezzar's inscription, this tower was never completed. Its unfinished state, its antiquity, its height and its location in a suburb of Babylon, are all suggestive of the story of the Tower of Babel.

It remains for some future excavator to penetrate far into the base of this old structure, and he who shall do so, may come upon treasures of the remotest age.

Chapter VII

UR OF THE CHALDEES

And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. Genesis 11:31.

Down in the marshes of Southwestern Babylonia, near the border of the great plateau of Central Arabia, and accessible from the modern town of Nasarieh and the Euphrates only by canoe paddled through intricate waterways among forests of reeds, are the mounds of Mugheir, and the best preserved of all the great temples of ancient Babylonia. No tourist has yet visited the place, and the few explorers who have ventured into the inhospitable region have taken their lives in their hands, for the water-ways among the reeds are a labyrinth through which only the experienced guide may find his way, and beyond the marshes are the Montifik Arabs, the fiercest of the desert tribes. In that desolate spot,

beneath the low mounds surmounted by a lofty temple tower, lie the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees, the birthplace of Abraham and of the Hebrew race.

Scholars have long associated Ur with the modern city of Urfa, far in the north, near the foot-hills of Armenia. Though the ancient name of Urfa was Edessa, the similarity of the names Ur and Urfa led the earlier generations to believe that they were the same, and that Urfa was therefore the birthplace of Abraham.

In the year 1853, when Mr. Taylor, the British consul at Busreh, was exploring among the various mounds of Southern Babylonia, he happened upon the extensive ruins of Mugheir. The group of mounds, nearly circular in shape, is more than half a mile in diameter. About the outer edge, a ridge somewhat higher than many of the inner mounds, marks the course of the ancient city walls; toward the northern end of the enclosed space, a tower of massive brick work rises seventy feet above the surrounding marshes. Though the rains of more than four thousand winters, since the age of Ur-Engur, its builder, have washed away the upper of the three stories of

its tower, the lower two are in a fair state of preservation. Mr. Taylor discovered traces of the stairway leading to the upper story, and about the base he cleared the chambers of the rubbish of past ages. Everywhere were scattered bricks bearing the name of Ur, and identifying the ruins with the home of Abraham.

The other mounds of the group, like those of most early Babylonian ruins, are thickly covered with the fragments of ancient pottery. Near the temple Mr. Taylor uncovered a small, square brick building with its ancient roof still in place. Its single chamber was completely filled with the drifting sand. It was in just such a house in this very town that Abraham lived when a child. It possessed no windows; the light entered by the doorway; the well-trodden dirt was the floor. There were no chairs, or tables, or beds, for then as now the Oriental sat and ate and slept on the ground. Only a reed mat or two, a stone mortar for grinding the grain, an earthen pot for water, a stone knife, a clay whorl and similar household utensils ever decorated the house, and even they were lacking.

In the cemetery in another part of the ruins,



Mugheir, or Ur of the Chaldees

the graves, protected from the rain and sun by the ruins above, were still perfectly preserved. They were tiny houses, seven feet long and four feet high and wide, and covered with a gabled roof of bricks. The cemetery was surrounded by a wall, and underlaid with tiles to drain away the surface water. At the time of the burial the body was laid on the level ground, and the mason, with bricks ready at hand, built the house above the dead. Along with the body were placed clay vessels of various shapes and sizes to contain food and drink for the spirit of the dead, and much of the pottery thus buried is still perfect. In one grave Mr. Taylor found parts of a skeleton lying on a reed mat; at its side were fourteen clay vessels, a copper bowl, an inscribed cylinder, a band of pure gold, four statuettes and several polished stones. Thus the people of Abraham's time and city were buried.

The most important of the objects found at Ur was a cylinder of baked clay covered with minute Babylonian writing. Its inscription related how Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, restored the temple at Ur; its closing words were a prayer for the welfare of his son, the biblical Belshazzar of the book of Daniel.

The present owner of the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees is Saadun, the sheik of the Montifik Arabs. In his goat-hair tent pitched at the base of the ruins he lives, and in Abraham's pasture lands he grazes his camels, as did Abraham of old.

Chapter VIII

HARRAN

And they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. Genesis 11:31.

Ur and Harran, or Haran, the two Mesopotamian homes of Abraham, were at the two extreme ends of the country. Ur was in the far south among the Babylonian swamps; Harran was in the far north, in the stony plain of the upper Euphrates. The two cities are associated, not only in biblical history, but in all Babylonian history, for both were centers of the worship of the moon-god Sin, whose name, according to some scholars, is also borne by Mt. Sinai. It was at Harran that Abraham's father, Terah, died; his traditional grave is still pointed out in the neighboring city of Urfa. There lived Rebekah, the maid whom Abraham's servant found at the well.

The site of Harran, twenty miles south of Urfa, and at a distance from the modern highway, is seldom visited by Europeans, for Kurdish brigands infest the region. Of its two low

mounds on the river Belik, one is crescent in shape: the other, like the star in the Turkish flag, stands before its concave side. The mounds of Babylonia are composed of the clay of disintegrated bricks, but Harran contains vast quantities of cut stones, and comparatively few fragments of pottery appear on the surface. In the early centuries of our era the city was an important Christian center; large stone buildings were erected on the earlier ruins, and the walls of the great cathedral and of a stone castle are still standing. The city walls may be traced; a beautiful gateway, the paving, and the round columns scattered about the plain, tell of the life of the city long after Babylonia had passed away. Harran flourished fifteen centuries after Ur was a ruin. The site has not yet been excavated.

Even now Harran is inhabited by a few filthy shepherds whom the neighboring Moslems call Red Heads, a term of contempt, and it is asserted that they worship the devil. The stone huts in which they live are shaped like beehives, and have but a single small chamber lighted only by a tiny doorway.

The traveler who ventures so far into the desert as Harran will be interested in a per-



THE RUINS OF HARRAN

fectly preserved, ancient well walled with stones. Tradition says that Rebekah was drawing water from that well when Abraham's servant, weary from his long journey across the desert, stopped to drink from her pitcher.

Chapter IX

AMRAPHEL AND CHEDORLAOMER

And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of Goiim, that they made war with Bera, king of Sodom, and with Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinab, king of Admah, and Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela. Genesis 14: 1-2.

Thus begins a chapter of exceptional interest to the modern archæologist; to the scholar of a few years ago it was a chapter of meaningless names, a record of imaginary wars between four traditional kings of Mesopotamia, and five of the Jordan valley, wars, so the critic said, invented to add glory to an imaginary Abraham. Recent discoveries have changed all this. Babylonian history of the end of the third millennium B. C. is still obscure, and the chronological difficulties are great, yet something is known of each of the four kings who fought with the five of the Jordan valley, who carried Abraham's brother Lot away as cap-

tive, and who were pursued and defeated by Abraham.

Amraphel, king of Shinar, was undoubtedly no other than the great Hammurabi, king of Babylon; thus the Hebrews corrupted his name, and Shinar was the ancient name of the plain in which Babylon stood. It was Hammurabi who united Babylonia, who restored many of the ancient cities, and compiled the code of laws recently found in the ruins of Susa.

Arioch, king of Ellasar, or Eriaku, king of Larsa, is known from the Babylonian inscriptions. His Semitic name was Rim-Sin. Larsa, the city in which he lived, is now marked by the mounds of Senkereh in lower Babylonia. Half a century ago, Taylor made slight excavations there, and since that time the wild Arabs of the vicinity have found the mounds a veritable treasure mine, from which they dig valuable antiquities. The author found on the surface of one of its mounds the trunk of a statue of a Babylonian king, and the greater part of a large cylinder containing a long historical inscription.

Tidal, king of Goiim, is supposed to have been the king of Gutium or of Kurdistan.

King Tudghula, mentioned in an inscription, may be identified with him.

Chedorlaomer, the head of the alliance against the Palestinian kings, was the king of Elam. The inscriptions tell us that about 2280 B. C., Kudur-Nankhundi, king of Elam, conquered Babylonia, and carried away an image of the goddess Nana, as a trophy of war. Some scholars see in him the Chedorlaomer of the Bible; others, with perhaps more reason, believe that Kudur-mabuk, a prominent king of Elam, and the father of King Eriaku of Larsa, was the leader of this ancient alliance. With whichever of the Elamite kings Chedorlaomer may finally be identified, one thing is certain: the four kings were not mythical characters of a mythical alliance; they were real kings who fought real wars, and the biblical chapter, telling us of them, is real history.

Chapter X

RACHEL'S HOUSEHOLD GODS

Now Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them in the camel's saddle, and sat upon them. And Laban felt about all the tent, but found them not. Genesis 31:34.

In the black, goat-hair tent pitched on the barren Mesopotamian plain, the one piece of furniture, apart from a few pots and a blanket, is generally a camel's saddle. Sometimes studded with silver and covered with blankets of many colors, it serves as a couch on which the secluded wife reclines to pass her days away; at night it is her pillow, but both day and night the hollow beneath the saddle is the hiding place for the objects she would conceal. The camel's saddle of the modern Arab tent is like the saddle of four thousand years ago, beneath which Rachel concealed the household gods of her father.

What were those teraphim, or images, or household gods? The ruins of the Babylonian cities of Rachel's age, as Nippur, Tello and

Bismya, have yielded numerous small statuettes of clay. Many are fragmentary; others are as perfect as ever they were. When the excavator first found them, he called them the toys of the children, but later he learned that they were household gods, such as Rachel concealed beneath the camel's saddle.

The images were formed either by hand or in a mould of carefully prepared clay. Some were flat in the form of a relief; others were round. Some represented female deities; others had faces adorned with long beards. Though they varied greatly in form, they were generally about five inches high. The most common type was clothed in a long, loose gown, and with a turban on the head. The nose, enormously exaggerated, covered the greater part of the face. The eyes were flat, round bits of clay plastered on the sides of the face; the mouth and chin were scarcely visible.

The gods of Babylonia were invisible deities, each presiding over a particular city. They were represented by large, stone images erected in their temples, and in the statues the gods were supposed to dwell. The people who would worship at home instead of at the temple obtained, probably from the priests, the small



A Household God

images of clay, and they would place them in a niche in the house wall, or they carried them about wherever they went. In a little niche in the wall of a house uncovered at Bismya, stood an image just where it had been placed in ancient times, and before it was a miniature clay altar. From just such a niche in the wall of her house Rachel took just such images, that she might have them with her in her new home beyond the desert.

Chapter XI

SEMITIC STRANGERS IN EGYPT

And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there. Genesis 12:10.

Frequently it has been asserted that neither Abraham nor any other of his people and age was ever down in Egypt, and that it would have been impossible for him or for any other stranger to enter the country from which all strangers were excluded.

Near the shore of the Nile, not far from Beni Hassan, one hundred and seventy miles south of Cairo, is a series of thirty-nine beautiful, rock-hewn tombs, in which many of the leading Egyptian families of the twelfth dynasty were buried. The walls of the tombs are covered with paintings, illustrating the chief events in the lives of the people buried there. On the walls of the tomb of Khnem-hetep, an ancient local governor, are represented thirty-seven figures of a tribe of people called the Aamu. The men are dressed in rich

garments, fringed and ornamented with colored designs; the women, with their hair long, wear red boots, and the children are borne in panniers on the backs of donkeys. The dress and features of these strangers, together with an ibex and a gazelle, which they are bringing as gifts, mark them as Semites from Asia.

When the scholar first saw the mural painting, he at once found in it proof of the possibility of the Bible story of Abraham in Egypt. Others believed that the chief of the strangers could represent no other than Joseph, who was bringing his brothers and their families down to Egypt. Though the modern Egyptian guide still explains to the tourist that the picture portrays Joseph and his brothers, it is now known that Khnemhetep, the official who was receiving the strangers, lived before the time of Joseph, and that the picture can have nothing to do with the Israelites. Yet it does throw light on the Bible narrative of Abraham's time, for now none may say that it was impossible for Abraham to have gone down to Egypt, or that Semitic strangers from Asia were forbidden to enter the country. The record of Abraham in Egypt may well be true.

Chapter XII

PHARAOH OF EGYPT

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hand of the Ishmaelites, that had brought him down thither. Genesis 39:1.

The most brilliant period in Egyptian history was during the twelfth dynasty, when the Usertesens and Amenemhats reigned. This proud age preceded a fall, for it was followed by five dynasties of kings known as shepherds or Hyksos. Who these foreign kings were, or whence they came, has long been a debated question. Josephus and the early scholars believed that the Hyksos were the children of Abraham, but the present scholars believe they were the Hittites of Asia Minor. However, the foreign Hyksos adopted the Egyptian civilization and religion, called themselves Pharaohs, and in all save blood they were Egyptians. They ruled at San, the Zoan of the Bible, near the mouth of the Nile, while

the Egyptian kings, driven to upper Egypt, lived at Thebes.

It was early in the reign of the Hyksos kings that Joseph was carried to Egypt and sold, and it is generally believed that Apepi II of the second Hyksos dynasty was the king of that time. Carefully guarded in the British Museum is the beautifully preserved head of the mummy of Apepi II. He may have been the Pharaoh who is said to have dreamed of the cattle by the river, who released Joseph from prison to interpret the dream, and who placed him at the head of the government. Now we may look upon his very face.

Chapter XIII

THE LAND OF GOSHEN

Now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. Genesis 47 : 4.

If you sail from the Mediterranean down the Suez Canal to Ismalia, to your left is the Arabian Desert with its drifting sand; to your right is the railroad from Port Said, and over beyond the railroad toward the Nile is the old land of Goshen. That bit of Egypt is famous in Bible story, for there the brothers of Joseph settled when they first came to Egypt; there they tended the flocks of the Pharaoh; there were the storehouses in which the grain for the seven years of famine was gathered; there the Israelites were forced to make bricks; there were wrought the plagues and miracles which preceded the departure of the Israelites, and there it is that one may expect to find traces of the Israelites in Egypt.

But the Egyptologist of a few years ago refused to believe that there ever was a land of Goshen. Long he had searched through the

thousands of Egyptian inscriptions for the mention of its name, yet not once did it appear. The only conclusion he could reach was that the stories of the land of Goshen, of the storehouse cities, and of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, were all a myth.

In 1885, in the mound of Saft el-Henneh, Mr. Naville discovered a large statue of Rameses II, the supposed oppressor of the Israelites, and from the statue he learned that the ancient name of that region was Kesem; the Hebrews pronounced it Goshen. Thus the Egyptian home of the Israelites was found. It was because Kesem or Goshen was less adapted to cultivation than were other parts of the valley, or because it was a sort of buffer land between Egypt and Arabia, that the Egyptians gave it to the Israelites. But under the Israelites the pasture land of Goshen flourished; its old cities were restored, and new ones were built by Rameses II. However, its prosperity continued only as long as the Israelites were there, for after their departure it again became pasture land; yet Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish traveler of the seventh century A. D., said that the modern Belbeis was the ancient Goshen, and that three thousand Jews were

still living there. Now once again the land of Goshen, protected by British rule, is irrigated and tilled, and among its fertile fields flourishing villages are scattered.

It was also Mr. Naville who discovered in the modern sand hills of Tell el-Maskhuta the ruins of the city of Ptum or Pithom. There he uncovered the foundations of city walls twenty-four feet in thickness, a temple, and the unusually thick walls of a long, rectangular building, whose bricks were stamped with the name of Rameses II. The chambers of the building were of various sizes and of peculiar construction, for none of them communicated with the others, and their only entrance seems to have been from the roof. They were the storehouses for the grain reserved for the famine. The bricks of the walls were of unbaked clay, and when they were examined, the explorer was surprised to find that only the bricks of the lower courses had been made with straw; others of a higher level had been made with reeds or stubble, and those of the upper courses were of pure clay, with neither straw nor stubble. Thus even the bricks of the storehouse city repeat the story of the oppression of the Israelites. The city of Pithom of the

land of Goshen, or Ptum of the land of Kesem, as the ancient Egyptian would have said, is no longer a myth, but a place which every traveler to Egypt may visit.

Chapter XIV

THE BIRTH OF MOSES AND SARGON

And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. Exodus 2:3.

As touching a story as any in the Old Testament is that of the birth of Moses, whose mother bore him in secret; for a time she concealed him, and when she could secrete him no longer, she placed him in a basket of reeds by the river's brink. The little Moses was rescued by the daughter of Pharaoh, and finally he became the first great leader of his people.

Among the clay tablets of the Nineveh library was found one containing the story of the birth of the ancient Semitic king Sargon. The tablet is fragmentary, yet the few surviving lines of the story are of unusual interest.

I am Sargon, the mighty king, the king of Akkad. My mother was of lowly birth; my father I knew not, but my father's brother dwelt in the mountains. The city of Azupiranu, on the shore

of the Euphrates, was my home. My lowly mother conceived me; in secret she gave me birth; she placed me in a basket of reeds and sealed its cover with bitumen; she laid me in the river, but the river did not drown me. The river bore me along; it carried me to Akki the irrigator. Akki the irrigator rescued me; Akki the irrigator adopted me as his own son; Akki the irrigator made me his gardener, and the goddess Ishtar favored me. . . . . Four years I ruled the country.

The remainder of the tablet is too mutilated to translate, yet the legible words hint of military expeditions across the Arabian Desert to the Mediterranean, and of an empire embracing much of the ancient world.

Is there any connection between the stories of the birth of Moses and of Sargon, the founders of two of the great Semitic nations? Probably not, but the reader will be left to answer that question as he will.

Chapter XV

RAMESES II

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. Exodus 1:8.

Rameses II of the eighteenth dynasty is supposed by many scholars to have been the Egyptian king "who knew not Joseph." The foreign shepherd or Hyksos kings, who welcomed the Israelites to Egypt, had been driven from the country, and the government of the entire valley returned to the Egyptians. During a reign of sixty-six years, the longest reign but one in all history, Rameses II, the third to rule after the Hyksos had been expelled, led his armies upon successful expeditions to distant lands, and with his prisoners of war he restored the ancient temples and filled Egypt with countless monuments which bear his name. No Egyptian king has left a more glorious record.

It was probably Rameses II who commanded that the baby boys of the Israelites be drowned in the river, who oppressed the Israel-

ites by forcing them to labor as slaves, and perhaps it was he who suffered from the plagues that Moses and Aaron brought on the country. Whether in his old age it was he, or his son Marempthah, who pursued the Israelites into the sea and was drowned, scholars are not agreed. However, no Egyptian character is more striking, nor has any figured more prominently in the thoughts of the Sunday-school scholar than has this hard-hearted Pharaoh of Egypt, Rameses II.

When Rameses died his body was transformed into a mummy, and with the treasures which it was supposed he might need in another world, he was buried in a secret place. Though the tomb was carefully concealed, the later kings, fearing that the grave robbers might discover it, carried his mummy and treasures to a more secluded spot. Therefore when the archæologists discovered his tomb, they found it as empty as if the grave robber had been there.

Way down in upper Egypt, at Deir el-Bahri, in 1871, an Arab discovered in a rocky cliff bordering the valley an almost inaccessible tomb, filled with treasures and the coffins of forty of the mummies of the ancient Egyp-

tian kings, queens and princesses. The Arab kept the discovery a secret and made the tomb a treasure mine from which he enriched himself by selling its valuable contents to the tourists. At length, when the archæologists perceived that the tourists returning from up the Nile brought with them the scarabs and cartouches of the greatest of the Egyptian kings, their suspicions were aroused, and Maspero, the director of the Egyptian Museum, supposing that the hiding place of the royal mummies had been discovered, went to upper Egypt to investigate. Finding the Arab who was offering the treasures for sale, he prevailed upon him by means of baksheesh, by threats, and finally by the bastinado, to reveal the place where he had obtained them.

It was in 1881, ten years after the Arab had discovered the treasure place, that M. Brugsch removed the mummies to the museum at Gizeh. As the winding cloth was cut away, the inscriptions showed that one of the mummies was that of Rameses II, the Pharaoh of the oppression. There in a secret place, beneath a rocky cliff in upper Egypt, safe from the ancient grave robbers and far from the tomb built for him, he had been hiding all these thousands of

years. The child who reads the story of the hard-hearted Pharaoh, and wonders if he ever really lived, may now look upon his very face.

Chapter XVI

MAREMPTHAH'S MONUMENTS

Would that we had died by the hand of Jehovah in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Exodus 16:3.

It is not yet quite certain whether the Pharaoh of the Exodus was Rameses II, or his son Marempthah, who succeeded him to the throne of Egypt. The fact that the mummy of Marempthah was not found with those of the kings of his dynasty has been explained by the supposition that he was drowned in the sea and that his body was never recovered. However, in 1898, it appeared with several others in a tomb in Western Thebes.

Marempthah has left two monuments of intense interest to Bible students. If he were the Pharaoh of the Exodus, it was his son who, while sharing the throne, fell a victim to the last of the plagues—the destruction of the first-born. In the Royal Museum at Berlin is a colossal statue of Marempthah, together with

his eldest son, who was also named Marempthah. It seems that this young prince did die early, for he entirely disappears from history, and his younger brother, Seti II, became the next king. That the young Marempthah, the first-born, who once sat on the throne with his father, died from the plague, is a theory the scholars have advanced.

If the Egyptologist of a few years ago had been asked what the Egyptian monuments have said of Israel, the reply would have been, "Absolutely nothing." Now his answer would be different, for the name of Israel has been found on a monument of Marempthah.

In 1896, Professor Petrie discovered a large, polished slab of black syenite over ten feet high and five feet wide, the largest stele of igneous rock ever discovered. Originally the stone had been placed in a tomb of Amenophis III; Marempthah stole it, placed its engraved face against the wall, and engraved its back, which then became its face, with his own inscription. The long story of his victories over the various nations ends with these lines:

Libya is wasted.
The land of the Hittites is brought low.
Canaan with all its tribes is captured.

Askelon is led forth.
Gezer is taken.
Jenoam is made as nothing.
Israel is devastated and its seed destroyed. . . . .
Everyone that prowleth about has been punished
by King Marempthah,
Who, like the sun, is gifted with new life each day.

Such is the one Egyptian inscription mentioning Israel. The information it gives is slight, yet we do learn from it that Israel had been brought low, so low that the nation's recovery was thought impossible. The one line may refer to the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, or to their wanderings beyond the sea where they preferred death in Egypt to starvation in a barren wilderness. However, none may now say that Israel is not mentioned on the monuments.

Chapter XVII

SINAI

In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. Exodus 19:1.

There is a triangular piece of land between Asia and Africa embraced by the two projecting arms of the Red Sea, so barren and rocky that it seems hardly worthy of possession, yet there great armies have marched and fought, volumes of history have been made, valuable antiquities have been discovered, precious minerals and stones have been mined, and early traces of man have been found.

As interesting as anything about Sinai is its name. In South Babylonia, at Ur of the Chaldees where Abraham was born, was a huge temple dedicated to the worship of the moon-god Sin. In North Mesopotamia, in the city of Harran where Abraham tarried, was another temple devoted to the worship of Sin. When Abraham left Harran he went to the

south of Palestine near Sinai. The name Sinai is but a Babylonian word consisting of Sin and the common Babylonian locative termination *ai*. Sinai then means the Place of the Moon-god Sin, and as late as the sixth century of our era festivals in honor of the moon were held in that mountainous peninsula.

If you sail down the Gulf of Suez you will see on your left a wide, white, sandy coast line. Beyond it rise range after range of steep, barren mountains capped with dozens of desolate peaks. The highest point in the peninsula is Mt. Catherine, rising 8,540 feet above the sea; upon it a monastery of that name has long stood. Jebel Musa, or the Mount of Moses, Omm Shomar and several others of the peaks are nearly as high. In ancient times the valleys winding among the peaks abounded with trees, and the mountain sides were partly wooded, but now the Wadi Firhan alone is fertile, and the mountains are almost treeless.

The modern inhabitants of the peninsula, between four and five thousand in number, are the hostile Towara Arabs, who pass a miserable existence wandering from place to place, and pitching their black tents wherever chance may lead them.

Recent excavations by Professor Petrie have resulted in the discovery in Sinai of the oldest of the Egyptian sculptures. It is a journey of two days through a barren wilderness from Wadi Firhan to the Valley of the Caves. Thither the Egyptians of the first dynasty went, and upon the smooth rocks, four hundred feet above their mines, they left their sculptures and the records of their expeditions. In one of the sculptures King Semerkhet of the first dynasty of Egypt is represented as slaying the ancient king of Sinai. Other kings of the following centuries imitated his example, and now the rocks of that part of Sinai form a fruitful field for the archæologist. More than two hundred and fifty inscriptions have been discovered there.

Ten miles north of the Valley of the Caves, in the district called Serabit el-Khadem, was found a temple of Hathor, the goddess of Sinai. It was she who guarded the hidden treasures, nor would the ancient miner seek for the precious stones without first invoking her aid. In her honor the adventurers carved a shrine on the summit of a rock, and each succeeding expedition added to it until it became a vast temple. About it they erected monu-

ments upon which they left their names. One inscription reads:

> Neferher the prospector, Aba the prospector, two collectors, three controllers, two hundred miners, three elders, three smelters, twenty boatmen, fifteen overseers, thirty peasants, seventy builders.

The sculptured head of the goddess Hathor adorned many of the stone columns of the temple. In the temple court were water tanks for ablution, altars for the burnt offerings, and an enormous bed of ashes, one hundred feet long and eighteen inches thick, representing the countless victims sacrificed to win the favor of the goddess. Thus the forms of worship are shown to have resembled those later employed by the Israelites.

Following the Egyptians of five thousand years ago, men have again penetrated the wilderness of Sinai, seeking its iron and copper and ochre and precious stones, and once more the mountain sides re-echo with the blasting and crushing of the rocks.

Chapter XVIII

THE LAWS OF HAMMURABI

And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God. Exodus 31 : 18.

It was a custom among the nations of the ancient Orient to engrave their laws upon stone, and to erect the stone in a public place where the people might read the laws and thus be guided. When the Hebrew laws were engraved on stone there was continued a custom which had already long existed.

In the winter of 1901-02, among the ruins on the acropolis of ancient Susa in Persia, the French expedition, headed by de Morgan, found three fragments of a large, black diorite stone. When the fragments were fitted together, they formed a monument nearly eight feet high. On the upper part of one of its faces is represented the seated figure of the Babylonian sun-god, and before him is

a Babylonian king standing in an attitude of worship. Beneath the sculpture, and covering the entire reverse of the stone, is an inscription of about four thousand lines arranged in forty-four columns, the longest cuneiform inscription yet discovered. The standing figure, so the inscription explains, is Hammurabi, the Babylonian king of about 2250 B. C., and he is receiving from the sun-god the laws engraved on the stone.

The history of the stone is interesting. It seems to have been one of several similar stones of the law engraved during the reign of Hammurabi. For eleven hundred years it had stood in a public street in Babylon, but about 1100 B. C. it was stolen by the invading Elamites, carried away as a trophy of war, and erected on the acropolis at Susa. There it was discovered by the French.

The inscription begins with a long prologue in which Hammurabi explains who he is, what he has done, and how he obtained the laws. Following the prologue are the two hundred and eighty-two laws dealing with practically every subject known to the Babylonians, all the laws necessary to regulate the society of those days. The laws are followed by an



Hammurabi and the Sun-god

epilogue in which dire punishment is threatened him who dares to mutilate the stone or disobey its precepts. In comparing the code of Hammurabi with the laws of Moses, we find many things in common. Both claim divine origin; both were engraved on stone; both were placed before the people for their guidance, and many of the laws were practically the same. Naturally the appearance of the laws gave rise to a heated controversy among the theologians. Some argued that the Hebrew laws were borrowed from the Hammurabi code; others that the two sets of laws originated independently, and still others that they both came from a still earlier common source. Before reaching a conclusion it should be remembered that the Hebrews were Babylonians who crossed the desert, that the Babylonian civilization was their civilization, and that there was constant intercourse between the peoples of Mesopotamia and of Palestine. For a complete translation of the laws the reader is referred to "The Code of Hammurabi" by Prof. R. F. Harper, but to illustrate their nature and the diversity of their subjects, the following translation of a few of them will suffice:

If a man bring an accusation against another, charging him with a capital crime which he cannot prove, the accuser shall be put to death.

If a man charge another with sorcery and cannot prove it, the accused shall go to the river, throw himself in, and if the river drown him, the accuser shall take his property. If the river show the man to be innocent, the accuser shall be put to death, and he who threw himself into the river shall take his property.

If a man steal goods from a temple or palace, that man shall be put to death, and he who received the stolen goods shall also be put to death.

If a man kidnap the minor son of another, he shall be put to death.

If a man aid a male or female slave to escape from the palace, or the male or female slave of a free man to escape from the city, he shall be put to death.

If a man break into a house, he shall be put to death in front of the breach, and shall be thrust therein.

If a fire break out in a man's house, and if a man who goes to extinguish it be envious of the furniture of the house, and take it, that man shall be thrown into the river.

If a man owes a debt and the floods carry away his crop, or if, because of drought, grain be not grown in that year, he shall make no return of grain to his creditor; he shall alter his contract, and shall pay no interest for that year.

If a man cut down a tree in another's orchard, he shall pay one half mana of silver.

If outlaws collect in the house of a wine seller, and she do not cause the arrest of the outlaws, or take them to the palace, that wine seller shall be put to death.

If a priestess open a wine shop, or enter a wine shop for a drink, she shall be burned.

If a man be in debt and sell his wife, or son, or daughter, or give them out to service, they shall work for three years in the house of their master; in the fourth year they shall go free.

If a man marry a wife and do not arrange with her the contract, she is not his legal wife.

If a man's wife be found lying with another man, they shall both be bound and thrown into the river. If the husband of the woman would save his wife, or if the king would save the man, he may.

If a woman cause the death of her husband for another man, she shall be impaled.

If a son strike his father, his fingers shall be cut off.

If a man destroy the eye of another, his eye shall be destroyed.

If a man break another's bone, his bone shall be broken.

If a man knock out a tooth of a man of his own rank, his tooth shall be knocked out.

If a man slave strike another's son, his ear shall be cut off.

If a man strike another man in a quarrel, and

wound him, he shall swear that he did it without intent, and shall be responsible for the physician.

If a physician operate on a man for a severe wound, or cut a man with a bronze knife in order to save his life, or if he open an abscess in the eye of a man with a bronze knife, and save the man's sight, he shall have ten shekels of silver.

If a mason build a house for a man and do not make its foundation firm, and if the house collapse and cause the death of the owner, the mason shall be put to death.

If a man hire an ox or an ass, and a lion kill it in the field, it shall be the owner's loss.

If a male slave say to his master that he is not his master, the master shall prove him to be a slave, and shall then cut off his ear.

Chapter XIX

THE ORIGIN OF THE SABBATH

Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. Deuteronomy 5:15.

According to an early verse in the book of Genesis, the sabbath is the oldest of all institutions, for it dates from the creation of the world. According to the book of Deuteronomy, the sabbath was also observed in memory of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. Though the Jews of a later date may have thought of the sabbath in connection with their escape from Egypt, the day was observed long before Moses led the Israelites to Sinai, even before Abraham crossed the desert, for the early Babylonians also had a sabbath.

Among the tablets from the royal library at Nineveh was a Babylonian calendar of clay, covering a month of twenty-eight days; it was a copy of a more ancient tablet, or perhaps one of a series of tablets covering the entire

year. According to the calendar, on each day of the month some religious duty was required of the king or of the people. The seventh day was a day of prohibitions, bringing to mind the puritanic sabbath of early New England. A translation of the calendar for the seventh day is as follows:

> The seventh day is a sacred day; the king of the nations may not eat meat roasted by the fire, or food prepared by the fire. The clothes of his body he may not change, nor may he wear fine clothing or ride in his chariot. He may not hold court, nor may he call in a physician. At night the king should offer his sacrifices that his prayer may be acceptable.

Such were the sabbath laws of Babylonia even before the time of Abraham. The calendar, it is true, was for the king's use, yet the same or similar laws must have applied to the people.

One peculiarity of the calendar is that it calls the seventh day *limnu,* a word which in itself does not mean sacred, but evil. If we should translate the first line of the calendar literally, we should read, "The seventh day is an evil day," a day when it is evil to feast, or drive, or transact business.

Still another peculiarity of the Babylonian calendar is that the rest days are always the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, twenty-eighth, and for some reason not yet understood, the nineteenth of each month. The months were lunar, each containing thirty days, and therefore the week between the twenty-eighth day of one month and the seventh of the next month, was nine days long.

Such was the sabbath of the early Babylonians, and the adherents of the three great religions of the world still observe it more or less faithfully, for Friday is the sabbath of the Moslems, Saturday of the Jews and Sunday of the Christians.

Chapter XX

THE TELL EL-AMARNA LETTERS

And Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah. Exodus 24:4.

The theologians of a generation ago were puzzling over the question, Could Moses write? or Was the art of writing known in Palestine in his days? One scholar argued that Moses could write, for he wrote the first books of the Bible; another maintained that no man of that remote age could write. But the question was suddenly and unexpectedly answered.

In the year 1887, while the controversy was at its height, an Egyptian peasant woman was searching among the ruins of Tell el-Amarna, on the Nile, for stone beads, for she thought she needed a necklace. Instead of beads she found a peculiar object of baked clay covered with wedge-shaped marks. The peasant woman showed the clay object to a European, who recognized it as a Babylonian clay tablet covered with cuneiform writing.

Systematic search in the ruins then resulted in the discovery of three hundred and twenty letters of clay, carefully stored away in a crumbling wooden box.

The scholars were surprised at the appearance of the tablets in Egypt, so far from the home of the cuneiform language; they were even more surprised when they read the inscriptions upon them. The tablets were letters written in Palestinian cities; in Jerusalem, Tyre, Sidon, Gezer and Ekron to Amenophis IV, the king of Egypt about 1550 B. C. This ancient king stored his correspondence away in a wooden chest, and when he died, the ruins of the palace covered and protected them. Naturally the question as to the art of writing being known in Palestine in Moses' day ceased at once. However, the letters do not throw any direct light on the question of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

The Amarna letters did far more than end this controversy; they have given us a vivid picture of Palestine before the Israelites possessed it. They mention large, flourishing cities, inhabited by people whose culture was already ancient—Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Byblos, Acre, Gaza, Joppa and Jeru-

salem. They tell of the occupations and customs of the people. They tell us that mines were worked, that the olive and the grape were cultivated, that cattle and sheep were grazed on the hillsides, and that the people of the larger cities lived about as did those of the Babylonian and Egyptian towns. Even then the kings of Egypt went to Syria and Palestine not only to hunt lions, but to find wives.

The religion of the people was chiefly nature worship. There were sacred stones and trees to mark the sacred places, or to represent the gods; the high place of later times was a survival of them. Images of sacred animals were erected, and human sacrifices were offered. When Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, or when Jacob erected a stone in Bethel, or the Israelites made a golden calf, they were worshiping according to the religion of the land. Thus were the Old Testament descriptions of the religious practices of the Canaanites confirmed.

In those days there was no central government, or, as the book of Judges frequently says, there was no king in the land, and every man did that which was right in his own sight. Though the country was at one moment a

province of Egypt, at another of Babylonia, it was split into scores of petty communities, each with a petty prince. Early Palestinian history consists chiefly of the wars between these princes, and of an occasional invasion of the Egyptian or Babylonian army to collect tribute. The country, thus composed of independent principalities, was waiting for some power to unite it, and that power came with the Israelites. They were the first to bring Canaan under one central, independent government, and to maintain it against the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Hittites. Thus the land of which our fathers knew next to nothing is now well known.

A translation of the entire collection of the Amarna letters would fill a volume; a few of them must suffice to illustrate their nature. An extract from a letter written by Abd-Hiba, the Egyptian governor of Jerusalem, to the king of Egypt, in reply to one complaining of his infidelity, is as follows:

To the king, my lord, thus says Abd-Hiba, thy servant; at the feet of my lord, the king, seven and seven times I prostrate myself. What have I done against the king, my lord? They have slandered me before the king, my lord, saying Abd-Hiba has

rebelled against the king, his lord. As for me, neither my father nor my mother appointed me to this place. The mighty arm of the king placed me over the house of my father. Why should I be guilty before the king, my lord? As sure as the king lives, I said to the officer of the king, my lord; "Why art thou favorable to the invaders, and unfavorable to the princes?" This is why they slander me before the king, my lord. . . . . Let the king give heed to the princes, and let the king, my lord, send troops. The king has no lands left. The invaders have plundered all the lands of the king. If troops should come this year, the lands of the king, my lord, would be secure to him, but should no troops come, the lands of the king, my lord, would be lost.

A letter from Jopahi of Gezer, beseeching help, reads:

To the king, my lord, my gods, my sun, the sun in the heavens, from Jopahi of Gezer, thy servant, the dust of thy feet, the groom of thy horses. At the feet of the king, my lord, my god, my sun, the sun in the heavens, seven and seven times I prostrate myself upon my breast and my back. I have heard the words of the messenger of the king, my lord, with great clearness. And let the king, my lord, the sun in the heavens, look well to his land, for the invaders are mighty against us; and let the king, my lord, stretch forth his hand to me, and may the

king, my lord, save me from the hand of the invaders, lest the invaders destroy us.

A letter from Jitia of Ashkelon reads:

To the king, my lord, my god, my sun, the sun of the heaven, from Jitia, of the city of Ashkelon, thy servant, the dust of thy feet, the groom of thy horses. At the feet of the king, my lord, the sun of heaven, seven and seven times I prostrate myself. The officer of the king, my lord, whom the king, my lord, the sun of the heaven, sent to me—I have heard his words with great clearness. I am guarding the king's palace which is in my care.

The early invaders of Palestine, so frequently mentioned in these and in others of the Amarna letters, are called the Habiri. The similarity of the name Habiri with the name Hebrew has caused scholars to wonder if the invaders were the Israelites who were then taking possession of Canaan. Though the Amarna letters were written long before it is now supposed the Israelites entered Palestine, the accepted chronology of that age is uncertain, and in those letters we may be actually reading of the Hebrews as they were conquering the land.

Chapter XXI

GEZER AND THE HIGH PLACE

Ye shall surely destroy all the places wherein the nations that ye shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree. Deuteronomy 12:2.

Not far from the railroad connecting Jaffa and Jerusalem is el-Jezer, the mound which marks the site of Gezer, an important city of ancient Palestine. From Gezer two of the Amarna letters were dated; the city was a wedding present from Pharaoh of Egypt to King Solomon; there the great Saladin was defeated by the crusaders, and there remarkable archæological discoveries have been made. The excavations were begun in the year 1902, and continued for three years, and though they are by no means completed, they have yielded valuable results.

The ruins of Gezer form two mounds between which stood an ancient Canaanitish temple. In them were uncovered eight cities, one beneath another. Down below the ruins,

cut into the native rock, the two lowest cities were the homes of the cave dwellers of a remote age; strewn about the caves were the fragments of ancient pottery, and cut into the surface of the rocks were cup-shaped holes, which were connected with the rites of the local, primitive worship. The third and fourth cities belonged to the Semites who occupied Palestine before the invasion of the Israelites; among the ruins of their rough, stone houses were pots and other household objects, and scarabs, which tell of the influence of Egypt in Palestine in those days. The fifth and sixth cities date from Hebrew times, and the remaining two represent a later age.

A vast amount of pottery fragments, a few entire pots, flint knives, arrow heads, lamps, beads, images, charred grain and a few inscribed tablets, recovered from the various strata, have enabled the excavators to reconstruct the history of the city, and to understand the customs of the various people who have lived there.

Between the mounds there projected above the surface of the ground the summit of a standing stone. Excavations about it revealed a row of similar stones, varying in height from

five to ten feet; they formed a high place in which the religious rites of the Canaanites were practiced. It seems that among the standing stones human sacrifices were offered, for in a cistern near by were the skeletons of fifteen men and of one little girl who had been sawn in two, or sacrificed to appease the wrath of the local god.

Near the standing stones and beneath the floor of the temple were jars containing the skeletons of newly born infants, and built into the walls of many of the houses were the bodies of other infants. It seems to have been a Canaanitish custom when a house was built, to sacrifice a child and bury its body in the walls to bring good luck to the rest of the family. As gruesome as the custom was, it still survives under various forms throughout the East, for animals are still sacrified on similar occasions.

Thus we are beginning to learn the religious practices in which human sacrifice formed a prominent part, and to understand why the Hebrew prophets of every age so severely demanded that the high places be utterly destroyed.



The Standing Stones of Gezer

Chapter XXII

THE LONG–LOST HITTITES

And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth. Genesis 10:15.

It was scarcely a generation ago that many scholars claimed that the Hittites were but a mythical race of people, yet the Bible frequently speaks of them. We are told that Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah from a Hittite, that Esau took Hittite women to be his wives, that King David married Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah the Hittite, and that Hittite soldiers were employed to fight the battles of the Hebrew kings. In spite of these and a score of other references to the Hittites, the scholars continued to assert that if such people ever existed, they were merely a small tribe of Palestine occupying but a village or two.

When the Egyptian hieroglyphs on the temples at Karnak were deciphered, there the scholars read of the wars of Rameses with the Hittites. One of the inscriptions records

the oldest diplomatic document in the world, according to which the Egyptians and the Hittites were never again to make war upon each other, or if one nation should be involved in a war, the other should come to its aid. There also on the temple walls was a picture of the Hittite city of Kedesh, and of King Rameses in his chariot, fighting single-handed with the Hittites. Still the scholars refused to believe that the Hittites were a people of prominence.

When the palaces of the Assyrian kings were excavated, and the inscriptions on the clay tablets were read, it was found that the Hittites were also frequently mentioned there. Tiglath-pileser of 1100 B. C. mentions them; Assurnasirpal of 884 B. C. says that he collected tribute from them, and Sargon boasts that in the year 711 B. C., he captured the Hittite capital city of Karkemish, destroyed it, and brought the Hittite power to an end. At length, with all of these evidences, the scholars acknowledged that the Hittites did exist. Now we know that this mysterious people once had large, fortified, walled cities; that at one time they ruled the greater part of the ancient world, and that their power was

scarcely inferior to that of Assyria or of Egypt.

Western Asia is filled with the ruins of long-forgotten nations, forgotten because they passed away before the historians of Greece and Rome began to write; now, one by one, they are coming to light. The nation most recently recovered is the Hittite, whose empire included the greater part of Asia Minor, from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. Hittite sculptures are found throughout Phrygia and near Smyrna; a huge rock sculpture is at Ivriz, near Tarsus. Eyuk, Boghazkeui and Karkemish were Hittite capital cities. Hittite sculptures have been found built into the walls of the houses at Marash, Hamath and Aleppo; numbers of Hittite seals appeared among the ruins of Nineveh, and a large Hittite monument has come from Babylon.

The ruins of the largest and perhaps the oldest of the Hittite cities bear the Turkish name of Boghazkeui; its ancient Greek name was Pteria, but what the Hittites themselves called their city, we have yet to learn. Recently Dr. Winkler of Berlin excavated there, bringing to light many of the details of a long-

lost civilization. The city was a mile and a quarter long, and half as broad; few places of that age were greater. The stone walls, fourteen feet thick, were pierced with narrow gate-ways scarcely three feet wide, and guarded with sphinxes. The ruins of citadels and palaces were strewn about the ground within the walls.

Though Dr. Winkler's excavations failed to reveal large, sculptured stones, such as have been found in the ruins of the Assyrian palaces, he made discoveries of far greater value. From a trench by the foundation wall of the palace came several thousand clay tablets resembling those from Assyria and Babylonia, and, like them, they were covered with cuneiform writing. The language upon many of them is Assyrian; one contains a copy of the famous treaty which was recorded in hieroglyphs on the walls of the temple at Karnak. On others of the tablets the cuneiform signs express the still undeciphered language of the Hittites.

Two miles east of Boghazkeui is Yazili Kaya, a huge limestone rock rising to the height of five hundred and forty feet. Into its summit are cut two recesses, and the walls



The Hittite Sphinx of Eyuk

of the recesses are sculptured with more than a hundred Hittite figures. Some of the figures are short, with clenched hands; some, bearing strange weapons, are marching along in procession, and some are standing on the heads of birds and of animals and of men. All the figures but one are of men, and that one probably represents the queen-goddess of the Hittites.

Five hours north of Boghazkeui, and beneath the modern village of Eyuk, is a Hittite city which is supposed to have been the summer home of the Hittite kings. Along the edge of the mound are sculptured stones representing a religious procession marching toward the city gate. One man in the procession is playing a musical instrument; a second is climbing a ladder; a third is leading a sheep to the altar. What treasures the mound beneath the modern village may conceal, one can only imagine.

The last of the Hittite capital cities was Karkemish on the Orontes, and there Mr. Henderson, while excavating for the British Museum, found the dozens of beautiful sculptures now in the Constantinople Museum. There are kings and queens and priests and

warriors and musicians and religious scenes, all in relief on a hard, black stone.

The many Hittite sculptures thus found throughout Asia Minor clearly portray these ancient people. They were a short, stocky race, with long, straight hair braided and hanging down behind. The skin was of a yellowish color, as we learn from an Egyptian painting. The forehead was receding; the eyes were oblique; the prominent nose was aquiline and suggestive of the Armenian; the lips were thick and heavy. The garment of the soldier was a short-sleeved tunic not reaching to the knees, yet the priests wore a longer gown fringed at the bottom. Men and women alike wore armlets and anklets, and the women beautified themselves with necklaces, belts and rings.

The favorite Hittite weapon was a double-edged sword, yet the long spear and shield were also used. The king in his chariot hunted lions as did the kings of Assyria, and it is now believed that the Hittites introduced not only the chariot, but also the horse, to Egypt, to Assyria and to Greece. Hittite art was adopted by the Phrygians who settled in Asia Minor, and by them it was carried to Greece.

The lion gateway of Mycenæ shows Hittite influence; the centaur and the pegasus were Hittite devices, and the double-headed eagle, the symbol of modern Austria and Russia, appears in Hittite sculpture.

Just who the Hittites were or to what race of people they belonged, we do not yet know. The Bible calls them the sons of Heth; they were probably not Semites. At present it seems that the mysterious shepherd kings of Egypt were Hittites, and future excavations may show that even now the Hittites are an existing nation. The Armenians occupy the country where the Hittites once lived. Just as the Hittites disappeared from history, the Armenians came into history, and a careful comparison of the sculptures on the Hittite monuments with the Armenian features has persuaded many a scholar that the Hittites and the Armenians are the same people.

The early Hittite language was picture writing; among their many strange characters one may recognize a jumping rabbit, an ox head, a human face, an arm, baskets, shields and other objects, but though well-known scholars have published attempted translations of them, it is doubtful if a word of their lan-

guage can be read with certainty. Later the Hittites employed the cuneiform characters, as did also the ancient Armenians, but, like the hieroglyphs, they are also undeciphered.

Thus, a nation which played a prominent part in the history of the early world, but to which the scholar of a few years ago denied an existence, is now resuming a place in history. Another voice from beneath the soil of Asia is now calling out its long-silenced testimony.

Chapter XXIII

THE CORNER STONE OF JERUSALEM

The king commanded, and they hewed out great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with wrought stone. 1 Kings 5:17.

The walls of Jerusalem, now visible above ground, are the work of the Arab kalifs, Christian Crusaders and Turkish sultans; the ancient walls have either been torn down, or buried so deep beneath the rubbish of the city that to trace their course has been a difficult task of the excavator. However, the eastern walls of the modern city and of the temple enclosure were built on the summits of the ancient walls, and, at the southeast corner, where the land falls away, the ancient walls may be seen above the ground. At that corner the wall rises seventy-seven feet above the surface. In 1868 a shaft, sunk to follow the corner wall to its base, was continued downward seventy-nine feet, to the native rock on which Jerusalem was built. The wall, both above and below the surface at that point,

therefore, reaches the height of one hundred and fifty-six feet. Way down at the bottom of the shaft, resting firmly on the rock which had been cut to receive it, was the corner stone of the city. It measures fourteen feet in length, and three feet and eight inches in height; it is squared, polished and cut with marginal edges, and though it is of immense size, it is smaller than other stones about it.

Upon several of the surrounding stones were peculiar characters, either cut into them or painted upon them in red. At first the marks were unintelligible to the scholar; they are now known to be the letters or figures made by the Phœnician quarrymen, to designate the place in the wall for which the stones were shaped.

Even more interesting than the marks on the stones was the discovery made in a small hole which had been cut to the depth of a foot into the native rock close by the corner stone. When the dirt was cleared from the hole, there appeared at its bottom a small, earthen jar standing upright and in a perfect condition. The jar was filled with dirt, yet once undoubtedly it contained the holy oil with which the corner stone was anointed. Though the city has been destroyed so repeatedly that it has

been said that not one of its original stones has been left on another, this fragile, earthen jar has survived all of the centuries since Solomon's day to tell us of the laying of the corner stone of Jerusalem.

Chapter XXIV

THE ROYAL QUARRIES

And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites did fashion them, and prepared the timber and the stones to build the house. 1 Kings 5:18.

It has long been supposed that the great stones of which the first temple and the walls of Jerusalem were built were brought with the cedar beams from the mountains of Lebanon, yet nowhere in the Bible is there mention of the source of the building stones. The stones used in the temple and city walls are of a lime formation, so white that when polished it resembles marble. The mountain beneath Jerusalem is of this stone, and strange would it have been had the blocks of the temple and city walls been brought from Lebanon, or from any distant quarry.

Not far from the Damascus gate of Jerusalem, at the base of the city wall which Sultan Suleiman built in 1542, is a small hole leading into a huge, labyrinth-like cavern. He who

explores the cavern may wander with lighted torch far beneath the city, but should he find himself in darkness, he would be lost in the intricate passage-ways; the skeleton of many a victim, who has thus perished, has been found. The Arabs call the cavern the Cotton Grotto, yet to the Europeans it was unknown until Dr. Barkley discovered it in 1852. Its entrance seems to have been a natural cave, but further on, its broken walls, its tunnel-like recesses, and the rock-hewn pillars supporting its roof, mark it as the work of man. It is the quarry from which the masons of Jerusalem obtained their building stone. Scattered here and there upon the floor are hewn blocks, just as they were left by the quarrymen; upon them the marks of the chisel still seem fresh.

Fortunately, the partly cut stones which the workmen left explain the ancient methods of quarrying. Incisions from three to six inches wide were cut into the rock by means of a long-handled pick; similar incisions behind, and also at the top and bottom, loosened the stone. To break the stone, thus quarried, into smaller blocks, the workmen drilled into it small holes, into which they drove wedges of wood, and the wooden wedges they soaked with water until

they swelled and split the stone. Into the floor of the quarry was a hollow, dug to receive the water which had dripped from the rocky roof above, and scattered about it were the broken drinking cups of the ancient quarrymen. To light the intense darkness of this underground quarry, the workmen cut into the rocks little cup-like holes to serve as lamps, and above the holes the walls were still black with the soot from the flickering flames.

The vast extent of the cavern can be explained only by supposing that from the time Jerusalem was first founded, all of the stones used in its walls and temples were quarried there. There it was that the skilled masons of King Hiram shaped the stones for Solomon's temple, and though three thousand years have passed since then, the quarry presents the appearance of having been abandoned but yesterday.

Chapter XXV

SHISHAK OF EGYPT

And it came to pass in the fifth year of Rehoboam, that Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; and he took away the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. 1 Kings 14:25-26.

Shishak I, the founder of the twenty-second dynasty of the kings of Egypt, or Sheshank, as he was known in his own country, constructed additions to the temple of Amen at Karnak, and upon the southern wall of the great court he caused to be engraved sculptures portraying himself as striking down with an immense club some Syrian captives. Upon the shields at his side are recorded the names of one hundred and fifty-six cities or districts of Judah and Israel, which he captured. Many of the names have been identified; one of them, Judah-melek, was supposed by the earlier scholars to refer to Jerusalem; more likely it

is a place no longer recognizable. However, the sculptures recording Shishak's invasion of Palestine are evidence of the historical truth of the biblical passage. Few Egyptian monuments have a more direct bearing on the Bible than this.

CHAPTER XXVI

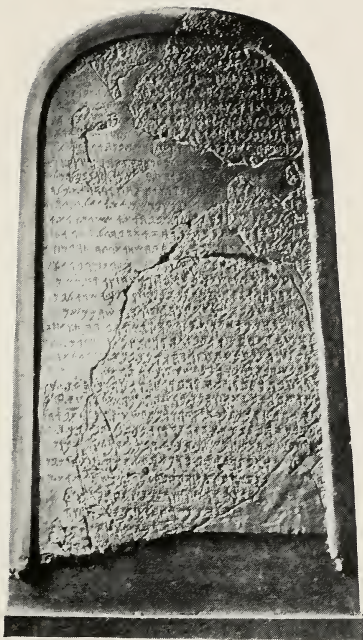
THE MOABITE STONE

Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master; and he rendered unto the king of Israel the wool of a hundred thousand lambs and of a hundred thousand rams. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 2 Kings 3: 4-5.

A day's journey eastward from the Dead Sea, among the rugged mountains of Moab, on the site of an ancient city, stands the little modern village of Diban. Now its few squalid huts shelter the wild Hameidah Arabs; there in the ancient days lived the shepherd king, Mesha, and on the surrounding hills he grazed the sheep whose wool he gave as tribute to the Israelitish king. The children of Gad built Dibon; Moses gave it to Reuben; in the time of Isaiah a high place stood there, and Jeremiah prophesied its overthrow. The opening verse of 2 Kings relates that Moab rebelled against Israel, and the third chapter of the same book relates how strategy recovered the country to the Hebrews. Of old King Mesha, the sheep

master, the Bible says little, for his name appears but once.

On the nineteenth of August, 1868, F. A. Klein, a French clergyman in the employ of the missionary society of the Church of England, was shown by an Arab sheik in a field near the modern Diban, an inscribed monument of black basalt. The stone, about four feet high and three wide and carefully rounded on the top, bore on one of its sides a long inscription of thirty-four lines in ancient Phœnician characters. Conflicting stories have been told of its discovery and destruction. It seems that Mr. Klein failed to inform the archæologists, who were then in the country, of its existence, nor did he make an effort to remove it. However he spoke to Dr. Peterman, the German consul, who at once attempted to obtain the stone for the Berlin Museum. At the same time, Ganneau, who had heard of the stone, offered to purchase it from the natives. The cupidity of the Arabs was thus roused, and immediately the stone, until then considered worthless, became a treasure of great price. When Dr. Peterman requested the Turkish Government to remove the stone, the Arabs announced that it was



The Moabite Stone

sacred, and that they would not permit it to be taken away. Fortunately at that moment Ganneau secured a copy of it. The Arabs, still unwilling that so sacred an object should fall into the hands of the Turks or Christians, built a fire about it and when it was heated through, they poured cold water over it, breaking it into a thousand pieces. The smaller fragments they gathered up and bound about their necks and arms as charms. The larger pieces were rescued and taken to the Louvre. Of the thousand or more characters which were engraved on the stone, six hundred and sixty-nine were recovered, yet from the copy which Ganneau had made, many of the missing words could be supplied.

What does this ancient Moabite stone from Dibon say? A translation of its inscription is in part as follows:

I am Mesha, the son of Chemosh-Melek, king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father was king of Moab for thirty years, and I succeeded my father. I erected this monument in honor of Chemosh at Kirkha, ... for he saved me from all invaders and caused me to see my desire over all my enemies. Omri was king of Israel, and he had oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. His son (Ahab) succeeded him, and he also said:

"I shall oppress Moab." In my days, Chemosh said: "I will see my desire on him and his house, and I will destroy Israel forever." Omri took the land of Madeba, and Israel dwelt in it during his days, and half the days of his son, altogether forty years. . . . . And Chemosh said to me: "Go and take Nebo from Israel." I went at night; I fought from day-break till noon, and I took it and slew in all seven thousand men. The women and girls I devoted to Ashtar-Chemosh. And I took from it the vessels of Yahveh, and offered them before Chemosh.

This stone, which has made clear many obscure Bible verses, and given a vivid picture of the ancient neighbors of the Hebrews, seems almost like a long-lost chapter of the Bible. The inscription was engraved early during the ninth century, and therefore it is the oldest writing in the language which might be called Hebrew, for it differs little from the language of the early Hebrew writings. It is not surprising, then, that the monument has been called the most precious of all the antiquities in the great museum of the Louvre.

Chapter XXVII

BENHADAD OF SYRIA

And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. 1 Kings 22:1.

The long, fierce wars of Ahab and Benhadad of Syria were interrupted by a peace of three years. Why these ancient enemies ceased their warfare, the Bible does not tell us, but from an Assyrian inscription we learn the cause of the temporary peace. In Armenia, by the upper Tigris, was discovered a rock inscription, saying that Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, defeated an alliance in which Benhadad and Ahab fought side by side. It speaks of the destruction of Karkar, the city in which the decisive battle was fought in 854 B. C., and mentions as the plunder taken by the Assyrians "1,200 chariots, 1,200 horsemen, and 20,000 footmen of Benhadad of Damascus; 700 chariots, 700 horsemen and 10,000 footmen of Ahab of Israel."

The simple Bible statement that there was peace between Ahab and Benhadad conveyed

little meaning until the rock inscription was discovered, but now we understand that the three years of peace meant fiercer wars. For a moment the two enemies became friends and together they fought in a vain effort to avert an Assyrian invasion. The inscription teaches us not only this; it adds a new chapter to the history of the wars of Israel.

Chapter XXVIII

JEHU AND SHALMANESER

And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years. 2 Kings 10:36.

In the large mound of Nimrud on the Tigris river south of Nineveh, among the ruins of the palace of Shalmaneser, king of Assyria from 860 to 824 B. C., Layard discovered a small, black, stone obelisk. The upper parts of the four sides of the obelisk are covered with pictures, twenty in all, and above the pictures, in wedge-shaped characters, are inscriptions telling what they mean. In the second picture from the top of one of its sides, a figure, with marked Jewish features, is kneeling on the ground as if about to kiss the feet of the Assyrian king before him; behind him are servants bearing gifts. The inscription above reads:

The tribute of Jehu, the son of Omri; silver, gold, bowls of gold, chalices of gold, cups of gold, vases of gold, lead, a scepter for the king, and spearshafts, I have received.

The biblical record of Jehu tells of his slaying the members of the older royal family and the worshipers of Baal, but it says nothing of an Assyrian invasion, or of tribute to an Assyrian king. The Hebrew records make no claim to completeness. The Assyrian inscription, therefore, contains a bit of long-forgotten Hebrew history, and in the picture we have an attempt at a portrait of a Bible king.

The Bible record says that Jehu was the son of Jehoshaphat; the Assyrian inscription calls him the son of Omri, yet the word for son may be translated as successor. The mistake indicates only that the Assyrian scribe was not familiar with Hebrew history; in no way does it affect the value of the inscription.





The Black Obelisk and Section Showing Detail

Chapter XXIX

MENAHEM AND PUL

There came against the land Pul the king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. 2 Kings 15:19.

Who was Pul, king of Assyria? On the monuments from the Assyrian cities the names of all the later Assyrian kings appear with frequency, yet among them is no such name as Pul. It therefore seemed to the earlier scholars that an Assyrian king of that name had never existed, and that the Hebrew scribe was in error. Finally, when the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III, the king from 745 to 727 B. C., were read, the scholars learned that he marched his army to Palestine and collected tribute from various nations. Among them were "Rezin of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria and Hiram of Tyre." It then seemed that Pul and Tiglath-pileser must have been the same.

Why did the Hebrew writer call Tiglath-pileser by the name of Pul? There is a tradi-

tion that in his earlier life, Tiglath-pileser was a gardener named Pul. The gardener became a soldier of ability, and seizing the throne, he became king. As if to obliterate all traces of his early life, Pul assumed the more dignified name of Tiglath-pileser, a name borne by the most illustrious of the Assyrians. The Hebrew scribe who called him Pul was merely using his earlier name, a name which naturally would not appear in the royal records of Assyria.

Chapter XXX

PEKAH AND TIGLATH-PILESER

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took . . . . Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. 2 Kings 15:29-30.

The Hebrew records which speak of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser as Pul later mention him by his royal name, and refer to his invasion of Palestine. Did Tiglath-pileser carry the peoples of Palestine into captivity, as the Hebrew records assert?

Among the inscriptions found by Layard in the palace of Tiglath-pileser is one containing the record of the invasion of Palestine. It is somewhat mutilated, yet the lines which are preserved say that the Assyrian king captured Gilead, made it Assyrian territory, and placed it in charge of his officers; that Hanno, king of Gaza, fled to Egypt; that Samaria was captured, and then, to use Tiglath-pileser's

own words: "I deported to Assyria all of the inhabitants, together with their property. Pekah, their king, I slew, and I appointed Hoshea to rule over them. Ten talents of gold and a thousand talents of silver I received from him."

Thus do the royal records of Assyria supplement and confirm the historical portions of the Old Testament.

Chapter XXXI

AHAZ AND TIGLATH-PILESER

So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, who rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Resin. 2 Kings 16:7-9.

Thus we learn that Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel united their armies, and together they besieged Jerusalem. Ahaz, king of Judah, resisted the siege for a time, and then with gifts of gold and silver he sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser, begging him to come to his aid and drive the besiegers away. Tiglath-pileser accepted the gifts, captured Damascus, deported the people and killed Rezin the king. Ahaz, in gratitude, then went to Damascus to express his thanks. Such is the biblical

account of the capture of Damascus by the Assyrians.

Unfortunately the inscriptions from the palace of Tiglath-pileser are so mutilated that a connected translation cannot be given. However, in the mutilated lines of one inscription we read:

> The tribute of . . . . Beth Ammon, of Moab and of Mitinti of Ashkelon, and of Ahaz of Judah . . . . gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, colored clothing, linen . . . . I received.

The name of Rezin frequently appears in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser. One mutilated passage, referring to the siege of Damascus, says:

> To save his life, he fled alone. I entered his city by the main gate, and impaled his chief officers alive. I took possession of his lands, and I hewed down his plantations, nor did I leave a tree standing.

Chapter XXXII

THE FALL OF SAMARIA

Then the king of Assyria came up throughout the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria. 2 Kings 17 : 5-6.

Shalmaneser IV succeeded Tiglath-pileser to the throne of Assyria, ruling from 727 to 722 B. C. Of the few records from his reign, one speaks of a three years' expedition to foreign lands; it probably refers to his siege of Samaria. Until recent years it has been supposed that he was the Assyrian king who captured Samaria, but from the records of Sargon, his successor, we learn that he only began the siege; Sargon completed it.

Sargon, the Assyrian king from 722 to 705 B. C., was the founder of a new dynasty, and the builder of the city of Khorsabad, in which his immense palace was discovered by Botta. Numerous well-preserved inscriptions upon stone lined the palace walls; two of them tell

of the siege of Samaria and of the deportation of the Israelites. In one the king says:

> I besieged and captured the city of Samaria, and I carried away 27,280 of its inhabitants as captives. I took fifty of their chariots. I restored the city, and causing the inhabitants to be more in number than before, I stationed my lieutenants over them. I made the people of the lands which I had conquered, to dwell there, and I collected from them the same amount of tribute as from the Assyrians.

Events as important as any in Hebrew history were the capture of Samaria and the deportation of the Israelites; thus the kingdom of Israel was brought to an end, and its people, the ten lost tribes of Israel, were dispersed throughout the world. Sargon's inscriptions not only teach us the name of the king who besieged Jerusalem, but they give us the very number of the captives. One may well ask if this number is correct. The Assyrian sculptures represent long lines of exiles marching before a tally keeper who counts them as they pass. The number is undoubtedly correct.

Chapter XXXIII

THE SAMARITANS

And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. 2 Kings 17:24.

It was a peculiar though a common custom of the Assyrian kings to subdue the rebellious subjects by transporting them from one part of the empire to another. This is what happened to the Israelites of Samaria when they were carried away by Sargon, and when strangers from other parts of the world were settled in their homes. In his annals, Sargon frequently speaks of settling strange peoples in the cities of the West Land, as Palestine was called. In one inscription, he says:

> The people of Tamud, Ibadid [and other unknown places] who never gave tribute to the kings, my fathers, I subdued, I deported, and caused to dwell in the city of Samaria.

From the inscriptions it would seem that Sargon settled people in Samaria at various times. According to the Bible record some of the people were from Babylon, Sippar and Cuthah, all well-known Babylonian cities; others, so Sargon says, were from places whose names are now strange, and whose location is uncertain. It is from this mixed crowd of exiles, together with the remaining Israelites, that the people later known as Samaritans came. These strangers were ignorant of the religion and customs of the strange land in which they were forced to live, and to instruct them the Assyrian king sent them priests.

Centuries later, when the Jewish exiles returned from Babylon to rebuild the fallen walls of Jerusalem, the Samaritans were still so odious to the Jews that their proffered assistance was rejected with scorn. Still later, in Jesus' time, they were so despised that no Jew would converse with them. And so today, a few of them, holding themselves aloof from the rest of the world, live in the cities about Samaria. In Nabulus are one hundred and sixty Samaritans who still retain the customs and the ancient religion taught by the priests of Sargon. Their Bible is the Pentateuch



Tell Ibrahim, or Cuthah

written in a peculiar language of their own; a copy of it in their possession is supposed to date from before the Christian era. They still observe the Mosaic laws; they have a high priest; they offer sacrifices and believe in good and evil spirits. If the wife be childless, the husband, according to the ancient laws, may take a second wife, and when the husband dies the nearest relative must marry the widow. Their peculiar dress, consisting of a red surplice and a white turban, dates from antiquity. Thus, easily distinguished in dress, in language and in religion, these ancient and despised people are a living record of the days of Sargon and of his wars.

Chapter XXXIV

THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION

Hezekiah . . . . made the pool and the conduit, and brought water into the city. 2 Kings 20:20.

In the valley of Kedron, between the eastern wall of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, are several reservoirs in which water for the ancient city was stored. One of them without the city wall is now called the Virgin's Fountain, for tradition says that in its water the Virgin Mary once washed the clothes of the infant Jesus; earlier it was known as the pool of Gihon, in which David anointed Solomon. The pool is fed by a peculiar, intermittent spring, which sends out its waters at irregular intervals, varying according to the season of the year. Apparently, the water is collected in a natural reservoir somewhere within the rock above, and when it has reached a certain height, it empties itself by means of a syphon-like outlet into the pool. The water then ceases to flow until the reservoir is again filled.

Over a thousand feet lower down the valley is a much larger cistern called, from the neighboring village, the Pool of Siloam. It is connected with the Virgin's Pool by an aqueduct cut through the solid rock for seventeen hundred feet. Robinson and other explorers have crept through the aqueduct from one pool to the other, though in places it is less than two feet high.

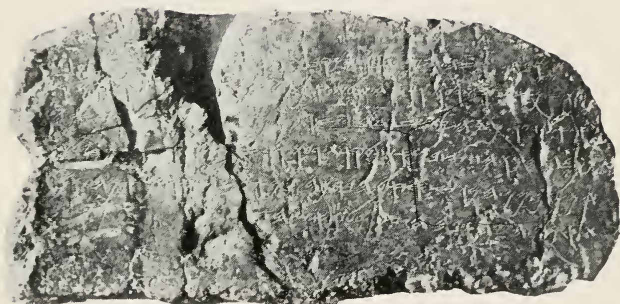
In the year 1880 a truant school boy was bathing in the Pool of Siloam, and when near the mouth of the aqueduct he slipped and fell into deep water. As he came to the surface, he noticed on a stone in the wall some marks resembling writing. The story goes that when the boy returned to school, and was about to be whipped for running away, he told the teacher of the inscription, thus hoping to escape punishment. His teacher, Dr. Schick, heard the boy's story, hastened to the pool, and there he found the oldest known Hebrew inscription. Though trained explorers had frequently visited the spot, it was a native school boy who first saw the writing.

To copy the inscription was difficult, for at times the water half covered it, and Dr. Schick had to sit in the mud, holding a candle in one

hand that he might see to work with the other. A deposit of lime, half concealing the characters, had to be removed with acid before they were recognizable. Of such great value was the inscription that several impressions of it were taken, and then the stone was left unguarded just as it had been for three thousand years. Suddenly it disappeared.

Some time later, as Dr. Wheeler of Jerusalem was attending his patients, he overheard a native woman telling of a stone her husband had found, and of which he was making a copy to sell to Europeans. His suspicion that the woman was speaking of the stone from the Pool of Siloam was aroused; search in the native's hut revealed the valuable inscription, though it was broken into several pieces as it was cut from the wall. With it was the copy which was being made. Both the stone and its copy were seized and sent to the Constantinople Museum, where they may now be seen side by side.

The Siloam inscription is one of the most valuable treasures the ruins of Palestine have yet yielded, for it is the oldest known writing in the pure Hebrew of the Bible, coming from the time the historical books were written. It



The Siloam Inscription

contains but six lines and they are partly broken away, yet their complete translation is possible.

Behold the excavation. While the excavators were still lifting up the pick, each toward his neighbor, and while there were yet three cubits to excavate, there was heard the voice of one man calling to his neighbor, for there was an excess in the rock on the right hand and on the left. And after that, on the day of the excavating, when the excavators had struck pick against pick, one against another, the waters flowed from the spring to the pool for a distance of twelve hundred cubits. And a hundred cubits was the height of the rock over the head of the excavators.

The inscription bears neither name nor date, yet its well-formed, rounded characters indicate that it is nearly as ancient as the Moabite stone. Scholars are now agreed that this was the pool and the conduit which King Hezekiah built to bring the water into the city.

Chapter XXXV

HEZEKIAH AND SINACHERIB

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house. 2 Kings 18: 13-15.

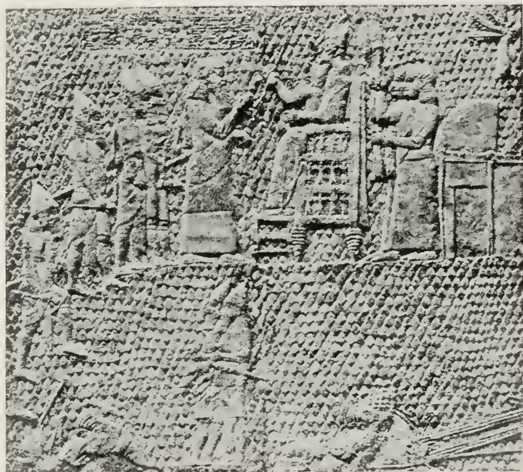
The story of Hezekiah and Sinacherib, continuing in the following chapters, is one of the most interesting in Hebrew history, nor has any biblical passage received more perfect confirmation from the records of Assyria. In Sinacherib's palace, which Layard uncovered at Nineveh, were numerous sculptured stones and inscriptions on clay, illustrating and recording the principal events in the life of the king. In one of the inscriptions on clay we read of an expedition to Sidon, Sarepta, Akko, Byblos, Ashdod, Ammon, Moab, Edom and

Joppa; the account then continues with the following words:

I advanced against Ekron; I slew the chief officers who caused the rebellion, and impaled their corpses on stakes about the city. The people of the city, who plotted evil and riot, I imprisoned; others, who had committed no sedition and were innocent, I pardoned. I caused their king Padi to leave Jerusalem; I placed him on the throne, and imposed tribute on him. As for Hezekiah of Judah, who did not submit to me, I besieged and captured forty-six of his fortified towns . . . . and I took as booty 200,150 people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, camels, asses, cattle and sheep without number, and I carried them away as spoil. I shut him (Hezekiah) up like a bird in a cage in Jerusalem, his royal city. I erected fortifications against him, and I punished all who left the gates of the city. His towns which I pillaged and separated from his territory, I gave to Mitinti, king of Ashdod. . . . . The former annual tribute I increased and imposed upon him. The might of my majesty overwhelmed Hezekiah. His faithful Arabians, whom he had employed to defend Jerusalem, his royal city, deserted. Thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones . . . . ivory couches, chairs of ivory, elephant skins, ivory, his daughters, his palace women, his male and female singers, I caused him to send to my royal city Nineveh, and he dispatched his ambassador to pay the tribute and to do me honor.

Such is the light this remarkable passage throws on Bible history. As if to illustrate the royal records there was found on the walls of the palace a sculptured stone relief representing the encampment at Lakish during the siege of Jerusalem. The king is seated on his throne before his tent; his officers are standing before him, and in the distance are figures with Jewish features, kneeling and begging the king for mercy. Above the king is an inscription which reads, "Sinacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, sat on a throne, and caused the spoil of the city of Lakish to pass before him."

The Bible narrative says that during the night, as Sinacherib was encamped before the city, "the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote of the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four score and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies." To explain the passage, the Jewish rabbis said that during the night mice gnawed the strings of the bows of the Assyrians, and defenseless, the army was obliged to return to Nineveh. The Assyrian records make no allusion to such a calamity. The scholars, however, believe they can read



Sinacherib at Lakish

between the lines of the inscriptions that Sinacherib abandoned the siege of Jerusalem to quell a rebellion in another part of the empire.

Chapter XXXVI

LAKISH

Rehoboam . . . . built . . . . Lachish. 2 Chronicles 11:5-9.

South of Hebron, near the southern border of Palestine, is the mound of Tell el-Hesy, into which the ancient city of Lachish or Lakish has turned. The square-shaped mound, measuring two hundred feet each way, is one hundred and twenty feet high; its lower half is a natural hill of rock; its upper half is composed of the ruins of several ancient cities.

The excavations at Lakish, begun in 1890 by Dr. Petrie and continued by Dr. Bliss, resulted in the discovery of eight cities, one beneath another. Though the author of the Hebrew book of Chronicles says that Rehoboam built Lakish, we may understand the statement to mean only that he restored the city, for it had existed long before Rehoboam's time. The site of Lakish was never occupied in modern times, for the ruins on the surface are from the age of Nebuchadnezzar. Just

beneath the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's city was a city from the time of Hezekiah; it was the city that Rehoboam restored, and where Sinacherib was encamped during the siege of Jerusalem. Still lower was a city from the time of the Amorites, and beneath it were ruins from prehistoric ages.

To the Bible student the city of the Amorites is of special interest, for among its ruins Dr. Bliss discovered in a chamber of the house of the governor of Lakish, a clay tablet covered with the wedge-shape writing of Babylonia; it was the first tablet of the kind ever discovered in Palestine, and therefore the interest it aroused was intense. The author of the tablet, Abish-yarami by name, directed it to an Egyptian general. It speaks of Zimrida, the governor of Lakish, who is also mentioned in the letters from Tell el-Amarna; therefore it was written during the fifteenth century, when the cuneiform writing was common in the land, and the Hebrew characters had not yet been developed. For the details of the excavations at Lakish, the reader is referred to the book by Dr. Bliss, "A Mound of Many Cities."

Chapter XXXVII

MANASSEH AND ESARHADDON

So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead. 2 Kings 19:36-37.

Sinacherib, so the story of the siege of Jerusalem concludes, returned to Nineveh, and there he was slain by his sons. From the biblical record one might infer that he was murdered soon after he abandoned the siege of Jerusalem in 701 B. C., but the Assyrian inscriptions teach us that he continued to live and rule for twenty years, and that it was in 681 B. C. that he met his death at the hands of his son. The Assyrian record says:

On the twentieth day of the month Tebet, Sinacherib, king of Assyria, was killed by his son in a revolt. For twenty-three years Sinacherib ruled Assyria. From the twentieth day of Tebet to the second day

of Adar the rebellion in Assyria continued. On the eighteenth day of Sivan, Esarhaddon, his son, ascended the throne.

It seems almost incredible that now, twenty-six centuries after Sinacherib was murdered, we may read his will; yet in the British Museum is a little piece of clay upon which the ancient king says that he bequeathes his most valuable treasures to his son Esarhaddon.

The Hebrew records tell us little of Esarhaddon other than that he succeeded his father to the throne; they are occupied with Manasseh, the contemporary king of Judah. However, the Assyrian records tell us that Esarhaddon fought with Tirhaka, 2 Kings 19:9, that he burned Memphis and carried the wives and children and possessions of the Egyptian king to Assyria. At Sinjerli, a Hittite city in Northern Mesopotamia, was found a large stone monument bearing his portrait. In his left hand he is holding two cords attached by means of rings to the lips of two smaller figures; one is Baal, king of Tyre, and the other is Tirhaka of Egypt.

In still another inscription Esarhaddon speaks of the construction of his palace. He says that he compelled twenty-two kings of

the West Land to provide him with building material; among them are Manasseh of Judah, Baal of Tyre, and the kings of Moab, Edom, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron and other Palestinian cities.

Chapter XXXVIII

THE GREAT AND NOBLE OSNAPPAR

The nations whom the great and noble Osnappar brought over, and set in the city of Samaria. Ezra 4:10.

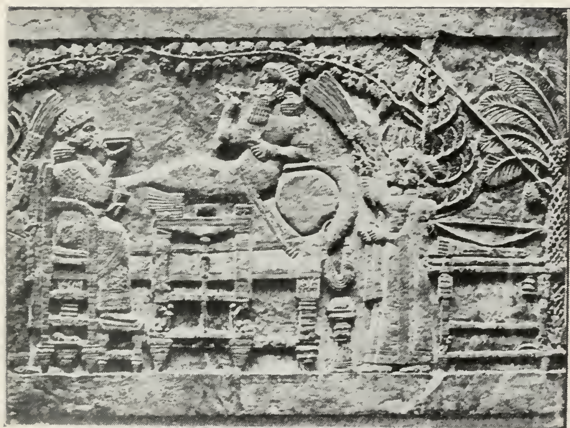
What is a name, the trumpet of fame?
The noble Osnappar was who?
He lived and he died; he laughed and he cried,
And that was all anyone knew.

So sang the grandmothers to the children of a few generations ago, and so mused the theologians as they wondered who the great and noble Osnappar was. In all history no such name appeared, and it was believed that it could belong to none but a legendary character. When the ruins of Nineveh were uncovered, and the inscriptions on the tablets were read, the name of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal appeared with great frequency. By a simple law of phonetics, the Hebrews had transformed the name of Assurbanipal into Osnappar. The Greeks, who called him Sardanapalus, have described him as a weak,

effeminate being, painting his cheeks like a woman, wearing dresses, and passing his days spinning with his wives in the harem. By his Greek name Byron has immortalized him.

Assurbanipal, the king from 668 to 626 B. C., was the greatest of all the Assyrian monarchs. The discovery of his palace at Nineveh with its sculptured slabs and collection of tablets, has made him one of the best-known characters of all ancient history. That he settled people in the cities of Samaria may be inferred from his inscriptions, for he speaks of transplanting captives from the land of Elam.

If our grandmothers only knew it, the great and noble Osnappar really lived and died, and laughed and cried, and his biography is now upon the shelves of many a library. Already we are familiar with his palace, with his library of a hundred thousand books of clay, with his portrait as he is seated with his wife in the garden; we even have pictures of his hunting dogs and we know their names. To no ancient king is the Bible student under greater obligations, for it was he who preserved for us the Babylonian stories of the creation and of the flood, and other records of inestimable value.



Assurbanipal in His Garden

Chapter XXXIX

JONAH AND NINEVEH

Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey. Jonah 3:3.

Along the western shore of the Tigris, opposite the modern town of Mosul, are the ruins of the "exceeding great city," Nineveh. The city is now represented by two huge mounds and the surrounding fallen walls. The larger of the mounds, called Kouyunjik, covers one hundred acres, and reaches the height of ninety-five feet; Nebi-Yunus, the southern mound, with an area of forty acres, is slightly steeper and loftier. The once strong walls, whose ruins still seem to protect the fallen palaces within, are in places forty-six feet high; their original height must have been not far from one hundred feet. Nineveh was probably the largest city of the ancient Orient, for its western wall was more than two and a half miles long; the Tigris River, which once flowed along its base to protect it, is now fully a mile away. The northern wall, seven thou-

sand feet long, was protected by a deep moat, while the western and southern walls, more than three miles long, were strengthened by a series of fortifications. The entire circuit of the city was about eight miles.

The mound of Kouyunjik has been the scene of the greater part of the excavations at Nineveh. Here, in 1842, Botta was the first to excavate, but without results, and here, in 1845, Layard made the marvelous discoveries which startled the world. In a word, the history, language, literature, art and customs of ancient Assyria were recovered. Among the tens of thousands of inscriptions on tablets of clay and slabs of stone are those upon which we may read the history of the city as the Assyrians themselves wrote it. There we learn that Nineveh was ancient, yet it was only late in its history that it became the home of royalty; the earlier kings lived at Asshur, Nimrud and Khorsabad.

The name Nineveh or Ninaa, as the Assyrians pronounced it, means the fishing place, and the groups of wedges employed to express it consist of two signs, a picture of a house and a picture of a fish. It seems that in the very early days, about 2000 B. C., Nineveh

was merely a fishing hamlet. The early inscriptions tell of an armory and of a temple, yet the ruins have yielded few objects dating from before the eighth century. According to the records, Nineveh was not a place of importance until 705 B. C., when Sinacherib, the first of the kings of Assyria to live there, made it a place worthy of his residence. In one of his inscriptions, he says:

I greatly enlarged the site of Nineveh; its outer and inner walls, which before my time did not exist, I built anew, and made as high as a mountain. The surrounding country, which had gone to ruin on account of lack of water, I irrigated. The people had no water; for the pouring of the rain from heaven they directed their eyes. I gave them to drink: . . . . I caused eighteen canals to be dug and to flow into the river Khauser. From the city Kisiri I brought the canal to Nineveh; I caused water to flow therein.

Again he says:

I greatly enlarged the dwellings of Nineveh, my royal city; I repaired the old streets and widened those which were too narrow. I made it brilliant like the sun.

Thus Nineveh, though an ancient city in those days, was never a place of importance

until Sinacherib's time, but that its glory was then great, its ruins testify. The last two kings of Assyria, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, also made their homes there. Just a century after Sinacherib beautified the city, the Medes and the Babylonians destroyed it, and gradually the words of the Hebrew prophet were fulfilled:

> And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the wilderness. And herds shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the capitals thereof; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he hath laid bare the cedar-work. This is the joyous city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! Everyone that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand. Zephaniah 2:13-14.

The smaller mound within the walls of Nineveh is called Nebi-Yunus, two Arabic words meaning the Prophet Jonah, for in the little village upon its summit is a tomb in which the Hebrew prophet is said to have been buried. Though Jonah was certainly not



Jonah's Tomb at Nineveh

buried there, as the natives believe, a monastery erected among the ruins in early Christian days, was dedicated to him. Later, when the monastery fell into Mohammedan hands, it was supposed that because it bore the name of Jonah, the prophet must have been buried there. Beneath the little dome of the shrine is a plaster mound to mark the grave of Jonah, and once each year, so the Moslem keeper asserts, a gourd springs up in a day to shade the tomb with its protecting leaves, and dies in the night, as did the gourd in Jonah's time. Because of the sacred tomb, so sacred that few Christians have ever been permitted to see its interior, excavations in the mound have never been carried on extensively, yet when an Arab was about to build a house in the village, Mr. Layard offered to dig the cellar if he might have the antiquities he should find while digging it. Few men have had a more spacious cellar, for Layard dug until he found the palace of the biblical Esarhaddon. There the palace still lies and must remain with all its secrets and treasures until the fanaticism of the Moslems shall pass away, and excavations about the imaginary tomb of Jonah shall be permitted.

The results of the excavations at Nineveh do not in all respects harmonize with the descriptions of the city given in the book of Jonah. The author of the book seems to have known little of Nineveh, for if Jonah lived in the time of Jeroboam, as we may infer from 2 Kings 14, Nineveh had not yet become the home of a king; it was merely a fishing hamlet. The views of the earlier scholars, that the ruins of Nineveh were but a part of a larger city of that name, can no longer be maintained.

The vast numbers of inscriptions discovered at Nineveh throw little or no light on the book of Jonah, for not one of them speaks of the prophet, or refers in any way to the conversion of the city. The excavations have perhaps taught us to understand the book as its author intended it to be understood, not as literal history, but a beautiful allegory, arguing that the God of the Hebrews was God not of Palestine alone, but of the Mediterranean, of Tarshish in the far West, and of Nineveh in the distant East.

Chapter XL

POPULOUS NO

Art thou better than No-amon, that was situate among the rivers . . . .? Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity; her young children also were dashed in pieces at the head of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains. Nahum 3:8-10.

The prophet Nahum was uttering threats against the great city of Nineveh; it should be utterly destroyed, and like No-Amon, its great men should be made captive and taken away. To the early scholar the prophecy was almost unintelligible, for history made no mention of a great, fortified city of the name No-Amon. Only when the royal records of Assurbanipal were discovered, was it learned that No, or No-Amon, or Ni, was the Semitic name for Thebes, the capital of Egypt. Then the passage was understood. In his record Assurbanipal says:

In my second expedition I directed the march to Egypt and Ethiopia. Urdamani heard of the approach of my army, and when I entered the borders of Egypt, he abandoned Memphis and fled to

Ni (Thebes) to save his life. . . . . I pursued Urdamani, and came to Thebes his fortress. He saw the approach of my mighty army; he abandoned Thebes and fled. My hands captured the entire city. Silver, gold, precious stones, the entire contents of his palace, colored clothing, cloth, great horses, the people, male and female; two tall obelisks weighing 2,500 talents, which stood before the gate of the temple, I removed from their place and carried to Assyria. Plunder beyond count I took with me from Thebes.

This passage from the Assyrian records is specially interesting, not only because it explains and confirms a difficult biblical verse; it speaks of the modern custom of transporting Egyptian obelisks to far distant lands. New York, London, Paris, Rome and Constantinople were only following the example of this ancient Assyrian king who decorated Nineveh with the obelisks from Egypt.

The prophecy, occupying the entire third chapter of the book of Nahum, was fulfilled. Thebes fell in the year 663 B. C., and if, as it is supposed, Nahum prophesied during the following year or two, he must have looked forward more than half a century, to the calamity he foretold. In the year 606 Nineveh fell never to rise again.

Chapter XLI

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about. 2 Kings 25: 1.

I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the exalted prince, the favorite of Marduk, the noble emperor . . . . the possessor of wisdom, the seeker after truth, the untiring ruler . . . . the wise, the pious, the first-born son of Nabopolassar.

With these and other similar words of self-praise the proud Nebuchadnezzar began many of his inscriptions which have been discovered in the ruins of Babylonia. The picture they present is of a boasting, haughty, fastidious, cruel yet pious king, ruling with absolute power. Hardly a character in all Oriental history is better known; the fame of no other has spread so widely, or has been so continuous. His is one of the few names of Eastern kings which has not at some time been lost to history to be recovered by the archæologist.

Especially about the name of Nebuchadnezzar has time woven many legends. It was not until recent years, when the excavator began to search among the Babylonian ruins, that anything historical was found to supplement the biblical and traditional accounts. He was named from Nabu, the Babylonian god of wisdom. Once in the Old Testament he is called Nebuchadrezzar, and it was by this name that he was known to his subjects, for the long name, as it appears in his own inscriptions, reads: Na-bi-um-ku-du-ur-ri-u-su-ur; its three words mean: Nabu, Protect the crown.

In 605 B. C., while still the crown prince, Nebuchadnezzar fought the Egyptians at Karkemish, and extended the Babylonian rule over Palestine to Egypt. Thus all of the Hebrew territory became tributary to him. The next year, in 604, he was made emperor of the Eastern world. Thrice during his reign his armies crossed the desert to Palestine, once to besiege Tyre for thirteen years, and again, in 597 B. C., when Jerusalem was captured. Eleven years later, in 586 B. C., he destroyed Jerusalem, and taking the Hebrew king to Babylon, put out his eyes. The only surviving evidences of his Palestinian expeditions are

two inscriptions bearing his name; one is by the Dog River, north of Beirut; the other is in a valley near Hamath.

In all parts of Babylonia traces of Nebuchadnezzar's activity are constantly appearing. At Bagdad, projecting into the Tigris, is a huge embankment of bricks bearing his inscription. His embankment along the Euphrates by Babylon still confines that river to its course. The houses of Hillah, a town of ten thousand inhabitants on the site of Babylon, are built largely of his bricks, and portions of the streets are paved with them. Higher up the river is a modern dam constructed of them, and for generations scores of Arabs have gained their livelihood by digging them from various ruins about Babylon. They appear in nearly every large ruin in Babylonia.

Of unusual interest are the excavations carried on by the Germans under Dr. Koldewey at Babylon. The city walls have been traced; the famous temples, the wonders of the ancient world, have been uncovered; the palace of the great king, with its hundreds of small chambers and its larger throne room, has been explored for its treasures. The plan of Baby-

lon is now well known, yet the city was so frequently and so completely destroyed that excavations have revealed few antiquities of an age before Nebuchadnezzar. Several inscriptions recording his building operations have appeared, and though they are not of great historical value, one of them speaks of his wars; it may refer to his expedition to Palestine, to the capture of Jerusalem, and to the exile of the Jews. An extract from it says:

By Marduk's help, to far-off countries, over distant mountains, from the upper sea to the lower sea, immense journeys, difficult ways, in pathless places where no foothold could be found, a road of hardships, without water, I pursued and I subdued the rebellious. I repaired the temples and made the people prosperous. I removed the bad and the good of the people. Silver, gold, precious cut-stones, copper, cedar, whatever there was of value, in great abundance, the produce of the mountains, the products of the sea, I brought to my city Babylon, into Marduk's presence.

Nebuchadnezzar was specially boastful of his piety; one of his prayers ends:

O Marduk, lord of countries, hear my prayer! May I live to enjoy the palace I have built! In Babylon may I live long and become aged! May I be



Nebuchadnezzar's Cameo

satisfied with an abundance of children! May my descendants live forever!

Several decades ago an Oriental appeared at the Berlin Museum offering for sale a small cameo engraved with a helmeted head of a Greek type. About the head was an inscription in Greek characters saying that the face was that of Nebuchadnezzar. The museum authorities believed that the cameo was one of the many spurious objects which the Eastern forgers were constantly sending to Europe, yet they took an impression of it, and returned it to its owner. Years later, when the archæologist could readily distinguish the false from the true, it was recognized that the cameo was genuine, and that it bore the likeness of the great king. Unfortunately, the little stone, perhaps the only one to preserve for us his features, appears to have been lost forever.

Chapter XLII

BELSHAZZAR AND THE FALL OF BABYLON

In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom. Daniel 5:30-31.

The author of the book of Daniel does not seem to have been familiar with Babylonian history; apparently some of his statements do not correspond with well-known facts. From his narrative it would seem that Belshazzar was the immediate successor of Nebuchadnezzar, yet the reigns of several kings intervened. He speaks of Belshazzar as the king of Babylon, yet in none of the Babylonian records is there mention of a king of that name. For these and other similar reasons the critic of a generation ago said, and perhaps rightly, that the author of the book of Daniel lived and wrote so long after the events he described, that names and dates were confused in his mind. It was confidently asserted that Belshazzar never existed save in a legend.

The theory that Belshazzar was but a mythical character was hardly advanced when it suddenly came to an end. In 1853, Mr. Taylor was exploring among the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees, in Southern Babylonia, when he discovered in a corner of the temple tower a clay cylinder covered with Babylonian writing. The inscription, coming from Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, described the restoration of the ancient temple of the moon-god Sin, and ended with a prayer of which these are the closing words:

> As for me, Nabonidus, king of Babylon, cause that I may not sin against thy great divinity, and bestow upon me a life of many days. And may reverence for thy great divinity dwell in the heart of Belshazzar, my first-born, favorite son; may he commit no sin, and with the fulness of life may he be satisfied.

Naturally, since the discovery of this inscription, Belshazzar has been considered an historical character, and now preserved in the British Museum are even the leases of the houses which he rented. According to the Babylonian records, Belshazzar was the crown prince, and he may have been associated with his father on the throne. The inscriptions say that when

Babylon fell, the king's son, probably meaning Belshazzar, was slain.

Various accounts of the fall of Babylon have survived. Every child is familiar with the story of the writing of the hand on the wall; the classical writers delighted to describe the great event, and the ruins of Babylon have yielded two accounts of how it happened. One is the royal record of the city; the other is from Cyrus who captured the city. In the royal record of Babylon, we read:

> In the month Tammuz, when Cyrus fought the troops of Akkad (Babylonia) at Opis on the river Salsallat, he subdued the people, and wherever they collected, he slew them. On the fourteenth day Sippar was taken without a battle. Nabonidus fled. On the sixteenth day the troops of Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle. Nabonidus was taken prisoner in Babylon. On the third of Marchesvan Cyrus entered Babylon and proclaimed peace to all the city. He appointed Gobrias governor of Babylon. On the night of the eleventh day Gobrias killed the son of the king.

The account of the fall of Babylon by Cyrus, as it appears on a barrel-shaped cylinder, reads:

> Marduk, the great lord, looking with joy on his

pious works and upright heart, commanded him (Cyrus) to go forth to his city Babylon, and he went by his side as a friend and companion. His many troops, whose number, like the waters of the river, could not be counted, marched in full armor at his side. Without a skirmish or a battle, he permitted them to enter Babylon, and sparing the city, he delivered the king Nabonidus to him. All the people of Babylon prostrated themselves before him, and kissing his feet, rejoiced in his sovereignty, while happiness shone on their faces.

In the continuation of the inscription, Cyrus himself speaks:

I am Cyrus, king of the world. . . . . When I made my gracious entrance into Babylon, with exceeding joy I took up my abode in the royal palace. . . . . My many troops marched peacefully into Babylon. . . . . I gave heed to the needs of Babylon and its cities, and the servitude of the Babylonians, whatever was oppressive, I removed from them. I quieted their sighing and soothed their sorrows.

Thus Babylon fell. For a time the great city was the home of the Persian kings, and its glory still continued when Alexander the Great passed that way and died. Gradually the city was deserted, and finally the words of the prophet Isaiah came true:

Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces. Isaiah 13:21-22.

Chapter XLIII

TRACES OF THE EXILES

I was among the captives by the river Chebar. Ezekiel 1:1.

The Babylonian captivity is a term generally applied to the deportation of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar, yet a search for traces of the Hebrew exiles must be extended to include all of the captivities which the people suffered at the hands of the kings of Assyria and Babylonia, and also those who voluntarily settled in Babylonia at various times. Probably among the latter may be mentioned the Igibi or Jacob family of bankers, who controlled the finances of the country for centuries.

The first Hebrew captivity of which we have record took place during the reign of Tiglath-pileser, between the years 860 and 824 B. C. The second was in 722 when Sargon, king of Assyria, captured Samaria and deported the tribes of North Israel. The third was from Jerusalem in 597 B. C., when Nebuchadnezzar captured the city and led away a part of its

people, among whom was the prophet Ezekiel. The fourth deportation occurred eleven years later, in 586 B. C., when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the remaining Jews, who had not fled to Egypt, were taken away. Doubtless there were many other captivities, and it may be said that even as late as the year 70 A. D., during the revolt of Bar-Cochbar, an exile of the Jews took place.

Thus Babylonia, the country which sent forth the ancestors of the Jews, again became their home, and its Jewish population probably was, and is even now, greater in proportion to its other inhabitants than is that of any other country.

The river Chebar, by which the prophet Ezekiel lived, may be identified with a canal in Central Babylonia. A few hours southeast of Babylon, nestling among the date palms along the Hindieh canal, is a little village known as Kifil, a word which is the Arabic corruption of the name Ezekiel; its inhabitants, exclusively Jews, have grouped their homes about an ancient Hebrew tomb in which Ezekiel is said to have been buried. The tomb is a large, square, brick structure, enclosing an open court, and surmounted by a pine-

apple-shaped dome. Beneath the dome is a large chamber with walls decorated with Hebrew inscriptions, and a grave marked by a plaster mound. Though the present building is of recent origin, the grave may, and probably does, date from ancient times. Here we may believe Ezekiel lived; here the exiles gathered to listen to his teachings, and here, in the terrific heat of the Babylonian summer, beneath the palms they sat "by the rivers of Babylon," and sighed for the hills about Jerusalem.

The exiled Jews were not confined to the Euphrates, for traces of them are found in every part of Babylonia. In a high mound near Koot on the Tigris are the foundations of large buildings constructed of bricks which are stamped with Hebrew characters. Further down the Tigris, not far from its junction with the Euphrates, is a large building known as the tomb of Ezra; to it flock the Jews from all the country round about, for it is one of their most sacred places. The antiquity dealers of Bagdad display for sale fragments of early marble tombstones inscribed with Hebrew characters, and terra cotta bowls covered within and sometimes without with Hebrew

incantations. The excavations at Nippur have yielded large numbers of objects suggestive of the Hebrews. On the summits of the high mounds the exiles lived, and their houses, though now nearly worn away by the weather, still present a vivid picture of their life. The houses were of clay or of unburned bricks, each with a single room lighted only by the doorway. The trunks of palms were the rafters, and above them were thick layers of reeds coated with clay to exclude the rains of winter and the heat of summer. The household furniture was simple—a mill-stone, a reed mat, a few clay dishes, an olive oil lamp and stone weights.

The Jew called himself the galutha or captive, yet he was as free as were his captors. From the inscriptions we learn that he had land of his own to cultivate; he raised barley, wheat, melons, grapes; he collected truffles and licorice root, and irrigated his date gardens. Some of the exiles were merchants, trading up and down the canals; some were brokers, caring for the property of their clients; some were jewelers, hammering out the rings of gold and silver and bronze, not only for their own wives and daughters, but

for the Babylonian women; a few were slaves, bought and sold as any other property. Civil rights in that absolute monarchy could hardly have existed, yet the captive Jew acquired property, and probably the only galling restriction placed upon him was the prohibition to leave the country for his native land.

The many Hebrew bowls inscribed with incantations reveal his superstitious nature. The inscriptions, usually accompanied with grotesque pictures of angels or demons, were prayers for the preservation of the life or for recovery from sickness. The water in the bowls absorbed the ink of the inscription, and as it was drunk by the patient, a cure was expected.

With the downfall of the Babylonian empire, the condition of the exiles changed but little. Cyrus permitted them to return to Jerusalem, but many of them preferred to remain in Babylonia. During the first century of our era, two Jewish brothers, Asinai and Anilai, established an independent state at Neherda, north of Babylon. There the chief of the captives resided, and thither the Jews, still mourning the exile from which they would not return, flocked for consultation and

advice. Still later, in the town of Sura near Babylon was a center of Jewish population, and there a university was established. Anbar, to the left of the Euphrates, had a Jewish population of ninety thousand during the sixth century of our era.

The descendants of the exiles still inhabit every part of Babylonia. Forty thousand of them live in Bagdad. The town of Hillah, on the site of Babylon, has as many or more Jews than Arabs. In the sacred cities of Meshed, which are almost inaccessible to the non-Moslems, Jews have made their homes. In the marshes of lower Mesopotamia, far from other habitations, Jews live and cultivate their rice fields as in the days of the exile. Beyond the Euphrates, in the great desert where even the Turk fears to go, a Jew is the agent of the rebelling sheik of the Montifik Arabs.

In general, the modern Babylonian Jew is an ignorant, fanatical creature. He still wears the yellow cloth about his head as he was required to do in the days of the kalifs; the women conceal their faces with heavy, horse-hair veils. The Bagdad Jew of a generation ago was excommunicated for sending his chil-

dren to school, or if his wife appeared on the street without her high, yellow boots, the first person who met her had a right to beat her. He still believes in the influence of the evil eye, and binds cheap glass objects upon his body to avert it; for the same purpose he pours salt water or breaks an egg on the ground. He heals his body by swallowing spiders' webs, or by passing a number of times beneath the bridge of boats. The Jewess twists silk about a bone to gain or to retain the love of her husband, and if childless, she has a score of ways to overcome her barrenness. Thus the Babylonian exile still lives, retaining his ancient customs and superstitions, and practising his ancient religion. The "lost tribes" of Israel are not lost; one needs only to go to Babylonia to find them.

Chapter XLIV

THE PSALMS OF BABYLON

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.

Psalm 137: 1.

Tradition says that David, the sweet singer of Israel, composed many of the Hebrew psalms. The more we learn of the Babylonians, the more certain it seems that some of the psalms were composed by the rivers of Babylon, and were first sung by the Hebrew exiles in a strange land.

Whether the Hebrew psalms were written before, or during, or after the exile, psalms were sung in Babylonia long before Abraham crossed the desert, perhaps even before the Semites entered Mesopotamia. Among the clay tablets of the Nineveh library were many inscribed with psalms of rare beauty. Some were written in the Sumerian language with interlineal translations, thus showing that they were of ancient Sumerian origin. When the

Hebrews worshiped by singing psalms in the temple, they were but continuing a custom inherited from their Babylonian ancestors. To Marduk, the god of Babylon, the worshiper prayed:

O powerful, first-born son of Bel,
Thou who art perfect in strength,
Who art clothed with terror and filled with violence,
Mighty art thou. . . . .
Thou judgest mankind;
Thou guidest aright him who goeth astray;
Thou holdest the hands of the weak;
Thou raisest the feeble.
O thou who dost pardon the sinner. . . . .
Look favorably on me and hear my cry.
May my words be acceptable to thee.
Release me from my sins and free me from my iniquities.

Another psalm reads:

O my god, who art angry with me, accept my prayer;
O my goddess, who art angry with me, receive my supplication.
O my lord, gracious and merciful, turn to me.
He who guideth the span of life, who stayeth the hand of death, accept my prayer.
O my goddess, look with favor upon me and receive my supplication.

May my sins be forgiven; may my transgressions be forgotten;
May the seven winds bear away my sighing;
May I strip off my wickedness, and may the birds take it to heaven;
May the fish take from me my misery, and the river bear it away;
May the beasts of the field take it from me;
May the running waters of the river wash me clean.
Make me bright like gold;
Like a ring of diamonds, may I be precious in thy sight.
Cleanse me from wickedness and save my soul.

As in the Hebrew temple, and also in the modern church and synagogue, a part of the temple service of the Babylonians was responsive. The worshiper said:

I am thy servant. Sighing, I cry unto thee,
Thou hearest the earnest prayer of him laden with sin.
If thou lookest on a man, that man lives.
O ruler of the world, O mistress of mankind,
O merciful one, it is good to turn to thee, for thou hearest prayer.

The priest replied:

O god or goddess, who art angry with him, he crieth unto thee.
Turn thy face to him and take his hand.

The worshiper:

There is no god but thee to guide me aright.
Look upon me with favor and hear my prayer.
Like a dove do I moan, and I am filled with sighing.

CHAPTER XLV

SHUSHAN THE PALACE

In the third year of his reign he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants. Esther 1:3.

In all literature there are few tales as beautiful as is the simple story of Esther, the Jewish maid, who became the queen in Shushan the palace. The story has often been called a fairy tale; scholars have argued that its scenes were laid in a land far too distant from the scenes of Bible history to give it the appearance of truth; that the description of the feast stamps it as Oriental imagination, and that of all the Persian kings, none bore the name of Ahasuerus. But the modern explorer says that Hebrew literature contains no picture of purer Oriental coloring; that the story may well be true; that the recent excavations at Susa have revealed the royal magnificence the story describes, and that Ahasuerus is but the Hebrew pronunciation of the name of the great Persian king Xerxes.

The level plain of the Persian province

Susiana, like lower Babylonia, has now been turned to swamps by the overflowing river, and there the explorer finds little of interest save the ruins of the cities of past ages; among them are the ruins of Shush, and the palace in which the Persian kings made their winter homes. Of the three mounds into which the royal buildings of Shush or Susa have turned, the loftiest is the citadel; there the French discovered the famous stone of the Hammurabi code and other even more ancient inscriptions. The second mound, somewhat lower yet far more extensive, conceals the royal residence; the third contains the banquet hall which the Persians called the Apadana, and in which the scene of the story of the book of Esther was laid.

In the year 1852, Mr. Loftus, a member of the British commission appointed to determine the boundary line between Turkey and Persia, dug a few trenches in one of the mounds and revealed the bases of columns containing long inscriptions in the wedge-shape writing. The inscriptions told the history of the building, and at once marked the place as the site of Shushan the palace. They read:

Thus says Artaxerxes, the great king, the king of kings, the king of all the countries upon the earth, the son of Darius, the son of Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, the son of Darius, the son of Hystaspes. My ancestor Darius built this Apadana in former times. In the reign of my grandfather it was consumed by fire; I have restored it.

The royal palace was therefore built by Darius, 521-485 B. C., burned during the reign of Artaxerxes, 464-425 B. C., and restored by his grandson Artaxerxes 406-359 B. C.

Loftus sought permission to continue his excavations at Susa, but the fanaticism of the Moslems of the vicinity made success impossible. It remained for a Frenchman, Dieulafoy, to uncover the banquet hall. In 1884 he requested the Persian Government to permit him to excavate the ruins, but permission was refused; again he asked, and only by persuading the Shah that the excavations would reveal the glory of his royal ancestors was the permission finally granted. The excavations were begun in March, 1885, and though the government soon ordered them to be stopped, they were continued. Armed bands of fanatics then sought to drive him away lest he violate the so-called tomb of Daniel, near by, but he

quieted them and carried his work to a successful conclusion.

Shushan the palace, unlike the palaces of Babylonia, was not of clay. Its limestone walls were still standing; little but the roof had fallen. It was therefore an easy matter to reconstruct the plan of the palace, and to picture it decorated with beautiful tiles and soft hangings. Imagine a huge, square hall, with flat roof of cedar beams supported by thirty-six stone columns arranged in rows of six, with three of its sides walled up, and the fourth left open, and you have a picture of the main part of the structure. The two sides of the large hall were flanked with smaller buildings, and at the rear was another apartment extending along its entire width. Such was the general plan of the banquet hall of Ahasuerus. The stones of the wall were highly polished, and the parts which were of stucco were painted red; the floors were paved with bricks, and the slender, stone columns supporting the cedar beams of the roof, were surmounted with bulls facing in opposite directions. The outer walls of the smaller buildings were decorated with a procession of lions on a background of pale blue, and the outer

walls of the main hall bore reliefs representing the body-guard of the Persian king. Here we may see warriors of Queen Esther's day, clad in long-sleeved tunics, green turbans and laced boots, and the coloring of the tiling is as bright as ever it was.

Though few of the interior decorations of the hall have survived, the imagination may easily picture the draperies and rugs, the gold and silver vessels, and the rich costumes of the banqueters. At the rear of the hall, beneath a crimson canopy, was the golden throne, and before it were carpets which the king's feet alone might tread. The drinking banquets of the Persian kings were so renowned that the Greek writers have described them. Herodotus said that the Persian nobles "are accustomed to debate upon the most important matters when they are drunk, and whatever they approve in their debate is proposed to them on the next day when they are sober, and if they still approve the matter when they are sober, they finally decide upon it. If they first consult upon any matter when they are sober, they discuss it again when they are drunk."

Another Greek writer says: "Generally the

king breakfasts and sups alone, but sometimes his wife and some of his sons sup with him, and the ladies of the harem sing and play the harp during meals."

Thus the book of Esther, the modern excavator and the ancient writers all agree in painting the same picture of life in Shushan the palace. No Bible story more faithfully describes the customs of the ancient Orient.

Chapter XLVI

HEROD'S TEMPLE INSCRIPTION

Then Paul took the men and . . . . with them went into the temple. . . . . The Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple . . . . laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that . . . . brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place. . . . . And the people ran together; and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple. . . . . And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. . . . . Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains. Acts 21:26-33.

Thus the apostle Paul barely escaped death at the hands of the Jews, because with Greeks he entered the inner court of the temple. As now the Christian who ventures within the Moslem mosques of the sacred cities of Mecca, Medina, Kerbela or Nejef would meet a speedy death, so the Gentile who entered the inner court of the Hebrew temple did so at the risk of his life. Josephus, the Jewish his-

torian, tells of notices placed upon the railing about the inner court to warn the foreigner not to pass within. He says:

> When you passed through these cloisters into the second (court of the seven temples), there was a partition made of stone all around, whose height was three cubits; its construction was very elegant. Upon it stood pillars at equal distances from one another, declaring the laws of purity, some in Greek and some in Roman letters, that no foreigner should go within the sanctuary.

Still again Josephus says of the sacred enclosure:

> This was encompassed by a stone wall for a partition, with an inscription which forbade any foreigner to enter under pain of death.

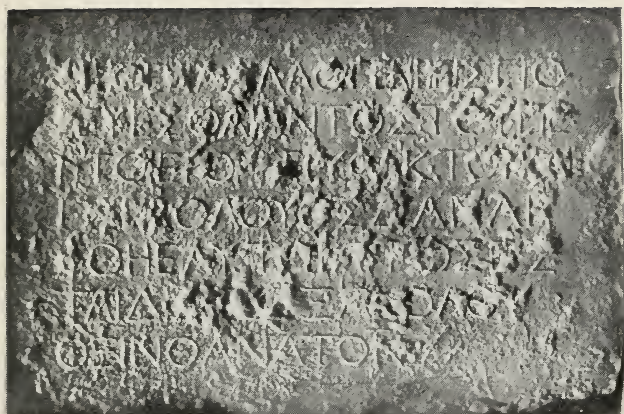
The story of Paul's arrest seemed to confirm the statements of Josephus, that the Gentile who entered the inner court might forfeit his life, yet modern scholars thought it unlikely that the Roman rulers of the city would permit the Jews to put a Roman citizen to death. Herod's temple, thus polluted by Paul and the Greeks, and containing the inscribed stones mentioned by Josephus, was destroyed by Titus in the year 70 A. D. Later, Hadrian's

temple was built on the site, and now the Mosque of Omar stands there. Scholars have long believed that Herod's temple was so completely destroyed that not a single one of its stones could ever be identified.

Outside the eastern wall of Jerusalem is a modern Mohammedan cemetery, specially sacred as the burial place of the sheiks of the Mosque of Omar; its surrounding walls are constructed of stones from the ruins of the ancient buildings. In the year 1871, Ganneau, a French scholar, was passing through the gateway leading to the cemetery, when he noticed on a stone of the wall marks resembling writing. Excitedly he scraped the dirt from the marks, revealing seven lines of an inscription in the Greek of ancient Palestine, and this is what he read:

> No foreigner may pass beyond the partition wall, or within the enclosure about the sanctuary. Whoever is caught doing so is liable to be put to death.

This valuable monument employed by the Turks in a stone wall was the very notice of which Josephus wrote; the notice gave the Jews authority to kill the stranger who polluted the temple with his presence; it author-



Herod's Temple Inscription

ized them to cause the arrest and imprisonment of St. Paul. This most valuable inscription, the only object known to have survived from Herod's temple, is now in the Constantinople Museum.

Chapter XLVII

THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. John 21:25.

During the early years of Christianity the four gospels were not the only books written to describe the deeds and to record the sayings of Jesus. In Egypt, where Christianity spread rapidly, there was great literary activity. It is therefore natural that the early Egyptian Christians wrote of Jesus, but until recently none of their writings have come to light.

Behnesa, the ruin lying in the desert to the west of the Nile, about one hundred and twenty miles south of Cairo, marks the site of Oxyrrhinkhus, one of the chief cities of ancient Egypt, and the home of many of the early Christians. In the year 1897, Grenfell and Hunt, both fellows of Oxford, discovered in the mounds of Behnesa a large collection

of Greek papyri, of which many were on theological subjects. Among them was a single page, torn from a book, containing several of the sayings of Jesus. Six years later, in 1903, the two scholars again excavated at the same ruin, and again they were rewarded by finding on the back of a bit of papyrus several of the sayings of another collection. Both papyri seemed to come from the third century A. D. Eight small fragments of still another papyrus roll came to light, and when placed together and translated, they were found to contain sayings similar to those recorded in the last verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew.

Several of the sayings on the papyrus first discovered are still perfectly preserved. Their translation suggests the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus saith, Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God; and except ye make the sabbath a real sabbath, ye shall not see the Father.

Jesus saith, I stood in the midst of the world and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and see not.

Jesus saith, Wherever there are two, they are not without God; and wherever there is one alone, I say,

I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I.

Jesus saith, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country, neither doth a physician work cures upon them that know him.

Jesus saith, A city built upon the top of a high hill and stablished, can neither fall nor be hid.

Jesus saith, Thou hearest with one ear, but the other thou hast closed.

The papyrus discovered in 1903 is badly mutilated; the ends of its lines are missing, and the bottom of the page is torn away. The text is therefore difficult to translate, yet the introduction and parts of several of the sayings are fairly distinct.

These are the words which Jesus the living Lord spake . . . . and he said unto them, Every one that hearkens to these words shall never taste death.

Jesus saith, Let him who seeks . . . . cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the kingdom, and having reached the kingdom he shall rest.

Jesus saith, Ye ask who are those that draw us to the kingdom, if the kingdom is in heaven? . . . . the fowls of the air, and all the beasts that are under the earth or upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea; these are they which draw you, and the kingdom of heaven is within you; and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive therefore to know yourselves,

and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the almighty Father; and ye shall know that ye are in the city of God, and ye are the city.

Jesus saith, A man shall not hesitate to ask . . . . concerning his place in the kingdom. Ye shall know that many that are first shall be last, and the last first, and they shall have eternal life.

Jesus saith, Everything that is not before thy face, and that which is hidden from thee, shall be revealed to thee. For there is nothing hidden which shall not be made manifest, nor buried which shall not be raised.

Chapter XLVIII

EPHESUS AND THE TEMPLE OF DIANA

Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Acts 19:28.

Few of the great cities of early Christian days have been so completely blotted from the face of the earth as was Ephesus; perhaps few cities were as deserving of such a fate. Even the name of Ephesus has disappeared; the village of the few squalid huts near its site is called by the Turks, Ayasaluk, a corruption of the Greek meaning The Holy Word of God. Of all the great temples of the Greek age, that of the goddess Diana left nothing above ground to mark the spot where it stood.

The traveler who visits the ruins of Ephesus, journeys by rail from Smyrna to Ayasaluk, and then makes his way past the ruins of a Roman aqueduct to the hills. In the hollow between the hills he may see the so-called tomb of St. Luke, and on the western slope of the hill called Prion are the ruins of the great theater which seated possibly fifty thousand

people. It was here that the idol makers, angered at St. Paul and his teachings, shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

In 1863, Mr. Wood, an English architect, obtained from the Turkish Government permission to search for the long-lost temple. For years he dug among the ruins of Ephesus, uncovering the forum and agora, and though he discovered sculptured treasures and coins in abundance, it was not till New Year's day, 1870, that he found the temple buried deep in a marsh without the city. A road from the Magnesian gate led to it. Along the road processions of the images used to pass, and into its marble paving deep ruts had been worn by the chariot wheels. For another four years Mr. Wood excavated among the ruins, and recovered inscriptions and material with which life in Ephesus during the days of Paul may be reconstructed.

As the excavations have shown, the pride of the city was the temple to which the people of all the world flocked and brought their gifts; it was counted among the seven wonders of the world. Vast as it was magnificent, it measured four hundred and twenty-five feet in length, and two hundred and twenty in

width, and it was built upon a foundation ten steps high. Each of the one hundred and twenty-seven pillars supporting the roof of its colonnade was sixty feet tall, and like the temples of Greece, its interior was open to the sky. Sculptures and paintings by the greatest artists adorned its walls, and its vaults were stored with wealth. It is said that the temple did an immense banking business, and that to the ancient world it was all that the Bank of England is to the modern.

The little silver shrines of which St. Paul speaks failed to appear among the ruins, but the terra cotta statuettes, which the pilgrims bought as souvenirs to take to their homes, were found in abundance. Of the silversmiths who manufactured and sold the shrines to the pilgrims, Demetrius, so we are told, was the chief, and the name of a Demetrius has appeared, in an inscription upon marble, as that of the temple warden for the year 57 A. D., the very year St. Paul was in the city.

The mission of St. Paul was to win the Ephesians from paganism; the ruins and the later history of the city tell of his success. From a long inscription engraved on the wall of the southern entrance to the temple, half



Site of the Temple of Diana at Ephesus

a century after St. Paul's time, one may infer that already the people had begun to lose faith in the goddess, and another inscription from 160 A. D. says that the goddess was no longer honored in her own city. Thus the worship of Diana ceased, and the glory of the temple, perhaps the richest and most magnificent religious edifice the world has ever seen, departed. In the year 262 A. D., Ephesus was sacked by the Goths and the temple was plundered and burned. A century later Constantine decreed that all heathen temples should be closed forever, and the temple of Diana was never rebuilt. Gradually the surrounding marsh encroached upon its ruins until finally they were buried and forgotten.



